1890

Participation and Protest:

Non-Governmental Organisations and Philippine Politics

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ABSTRACT

Since the late 1980s, a significant number of studies of the work of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the developing world have been published, giving rise to a distinctive literature within the social sciences. This literature however focuses on the socio-economic aspects of NGO action and is of limited use to political scientists in interpreting the "associational revolution" triggered by the proliferation of NGOs in Asia, Africa and Latin America in recent decades.

Michael Bratton has argued that it is in the political sphere rather than the economic that the contributions of NGOs to development should be mainly seen, yet political scientists have failed to contribute proportionately to the evolving NGO literature. Following Bratton, this dissertation examines the role of NGOs in Philippine politics, especially since the collapse of the Marcos dictatorship in February 1986. The dissertation examines the history of Philippine NGO participation in politics, relations between NGOs and the Philippine state since 1986, the institutional forces promoting the proliferation of NGOs, and the main mechanisms through which NGOs engage in politics. Case-studies of two of the Philippines' leading NGOs elaborate on the general arguments from early chapters and reveal that NGO strategy is characterised by a complex blend of participation and protest shaped by the policies of a succession of regimes throughout the late twentieth century.

Between 1984 and 1993, the number of NGOs in the Philippines grew by 148%. This growth raises important questions about the nature of NGO action and its impact on Philippine politics, the state, and civil society. Does the NGO community strengthen civil society? Can it transform relations between the state and civil society? Can it help to empower the millions traditionally marginalised from political participation in the Philippines? On the first question, the dissertation argues that NGOs simultaneously weaken and strengthen civil society and that the NGO community is best seen as a new arena within which battles from society at large are internalized. On the second, it argues that collaboration between NGOs and the state has strengthened the state in small yet significant ways, helping it to attack entrenched socio-economic elite interests and helping the state to attract broad-based popular support for far-reaching political and economic reforms. On the third question, the dissertation argues that expanding political participation has been one of the main achievements of the Philippine NGO community and that NGOs, by linking with grass-roots "people's organisations", have filled an important institutional vacuum resulting from the inability of political parties, trade unions and peasant associations to promote sustained popular political participation.

The main significance of growth in the Philippine NGO community is political. As the dissertation argues throughout, the proliferation, regional distribution and organisational character of NGOs, as well as the tasks they perform and the posture they adopt vis-a-vis state agencies and the private sector, have all been determined by essentially political factors. Philippine NGOs and the people's organisations with which they work closely are significant mainly for their broad organisational reach and their ability to organise and mobilise around ideologically-coherent interests, hence making them an important actor in Philippine politics.

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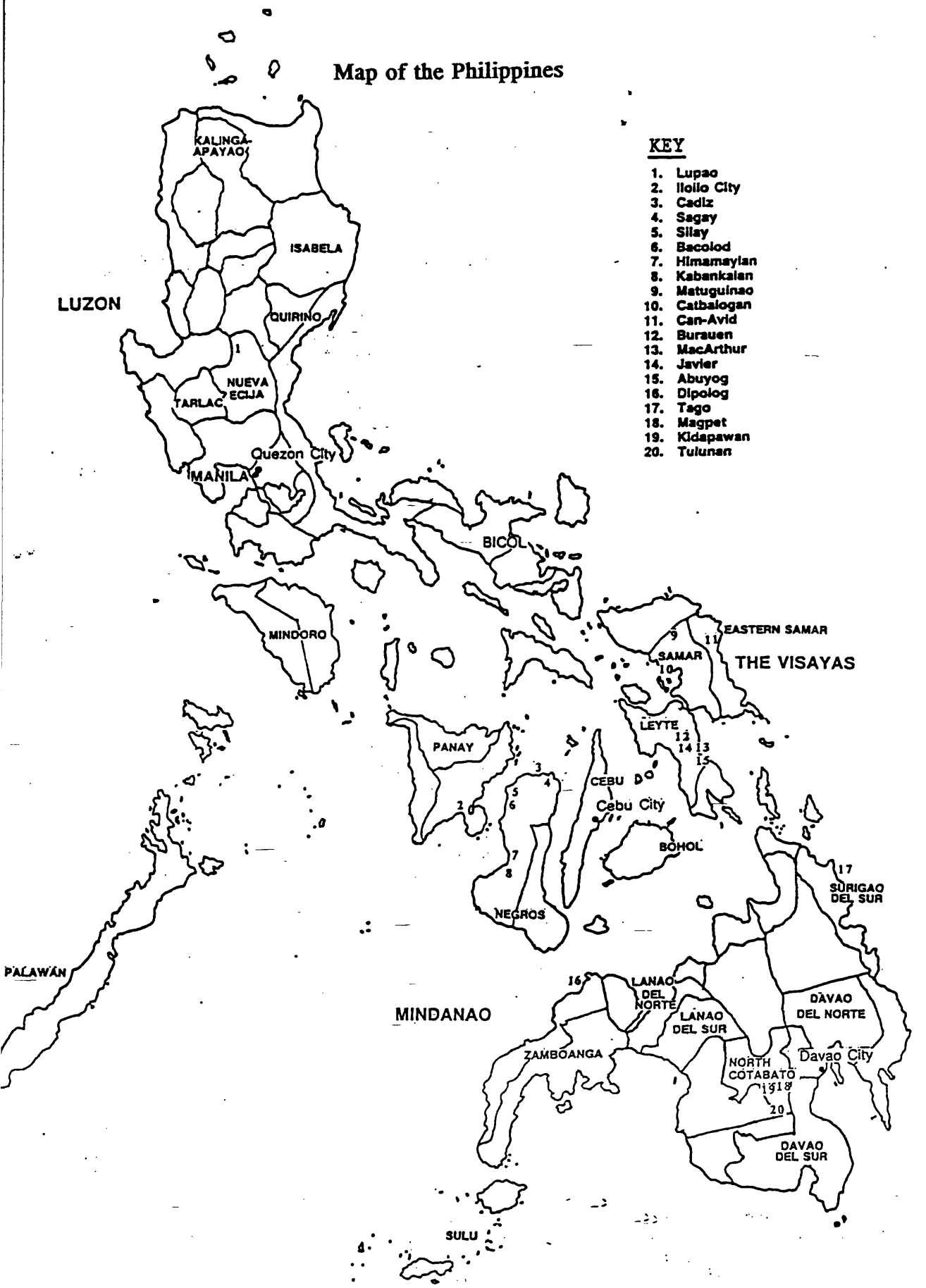
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMNS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
AMRSP	Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines
ARC	Agrarian Reform Community
ARADO	Agrarian Reform Alliance of Democratic Organisations in Negros
BAYAN	Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (New Patriotic Alliance)
BCC	Basic Christian Community
BEC	Basic Ecclesial Community
BISIG	Bukluran sa Ikauunlad ng Sosyalista Isap at Gawa (Movement for the Advancement of Socialist Ideas and Action)
CAFGU	Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit
CARP	Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Programme
CDF	Countryside Development Fund
CFPI	Cooperatives Foundation of the Philippinces Inc.
CHR	Commission on Human Rights
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CNL	Christians for National Liberation
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines
CPAR	Congress for a Peoples Agrarian Reform
CODE-NGO	Caucus of Development NGO Networks
COG	Cause-Oriented Group
DA	Department of Agriculture
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DILG	Department of Interior and Local Government
DJANGO	Development, Justice and Advocacy NGO
DOH	Department of Health
DOJ	Department of Justice
DSK	Demokratikong Sosyalista Koalisyon (Democratic Socialist Coalition)
EMJP	Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace
FDC	Freedom from Debt Coalition
FGS	Fourth Generation Strategy
FPE	Foundation for the Philippine Environment
GNP	Gross National Product
FIND	Families of Victims of Involuntary Disappearances
FLAG	Free Legal Assistance Group
IIRR	International Institute for Rural Reconstruction
IPAS	Integrated Protected Area Systems programme (DENR)
IPD	Institute for Popular Democracy
JICA	Japanese International Co-operation Agency
JCRR	Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction (Taiwan)
KAPATID	Kapisanan para sa Pagpapalaya at Amnestiya ng mga Detenidong Pulitikal (Asociation for the Release and Amnesty of Political Detainees)
KMP	Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (Philippine Peasants Union)

LDP	Laban Demokratikong ng Pilipinas (Fight for Philippine Democracy)
LGC	Local Government Code
MARTYR	Mothers and Relatives against Tyranny and Repression
MDC	Municipal Development Council
MEM	Mass Education Movement (Pre-revolutionary China)
MLMTT	Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse Tung thought
MPD	Movement for Popular Democracy
MSPC	Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference
MUNGO	Mutant NGO
NACFAR	National Council for Aquatic Resources
NASSA	National Secretariat for Social Action
NCCP	National Council of Churches in the Philippines
NEDA	National Economic and Development Authority
NIC	Newly Industrializing Country
NOVIB	Nederlandse Organisatie Voor Internationale Ontwikkefingssamenwerk (Netherlands Organisation for International Development)
NUCD	National Union of Christian Democrats
NDF	National Democratic Front
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPA	New Peoples Army
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PO	Peoples' Organisation
PAHRA	Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates
PBSP	Philippine Business for Social Progress
PCHR	Presidential Committee on Human Rights (1986-1987)
PCSD	Presidential Council for Sustainable Development
PDP	Partido Demokratikong ng Pilipinas (Philippine Democratic Party)
PhilDHRRA	Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas
PMS	Presidential Management Staff
PNB	Partido ng Bayan (Peoples Party)
PRRM	Philippine Rural Recontruction Movement
PSF	Presidential Social Fund
RAM	Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabayan, (Revolutionary Nationalist Alliance formerly, the Reform the Armed Forces Movement)
RDC	Regional Development Council
RDDP	Rural Democratization and Development Programme (PRRM)
RRW	Rural Reconstruction Worker (PRRM pre-1986)
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission
SELDA	Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainees Laban sa Detensiyon at para sa Amnestiya (Association of Ex-Detainees against Detention and for Amnesty)
SRD	Sustainable Rural District (PRRM)
SRDDP	Sustainable Rural District Development Programme (PRRM)
TFAS	Task Force Apo Sandawa
TFD	Task Force Devolution (DOH)
TFDP	Task Force Detainees of the Philippines
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VPD	Volunteers for Popular Democracy (1986-1987)

Map of the Philippines



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CHAPTER ONE: The Politics of NGO Action in the Developing World: Theoretical and Comparative Overview.

1. Introduction

Since the late 1980s, a significant number of studies on the work of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the developing world have been published, giving rise to a distinctive literature within the social sciences. In 1987, *World Development* brought out a special issue on NGOs and development,[1] based on the proceedings of a major conference. Then followed a series of books[2] including the Overseas Development Institute's four-volume series on NGOs and the state in the developing world.[3] These works are now complemented

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[1] **World Development**, special supplement to Volume 15, 1987.

[2] These include A. G. Drabek (Ed.), **Development Alternatives: The Challenge for NGOs**, Pergamon Press, New York, 1987; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, **Voluntary Aid for Development: The Role of Non-governmental Organisations**, Paris, 1988; Robin Poulton and Michael Harris (Eds.), **Putting People First: Voluntary Organisations and Third World Development**, Macmillan, London, 1988; Richard Holloway (Ed.), **Doing Development: Governments, NGOs and the Rural Poor in Asia**, Earthscan/CUSO, London, 1989; David C. Korten, **Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda**, Kumarian Press, West Hartford CT, 1990; John Clark, **Democratizing Development: The Role of Voluntary Organisations**, Earthscan, London, 1991; Thomas F. Carroll, **Intermediary NGOs: The Supporting Links in Grassroots Development**, Kumarian Press, West Hartford CT, 1992; Michael Edwards and David Hulme (Eds.), **Making A Difference: NGOs and Development in a Changing World**, Earthscan, London, 1992; Julie Fisher, **The Road From Rio: Sustainable Development and the Nongovernmental Movement in the Third World**, Praeger, Westport CT, 1993; Ian Smillie and Henny Helmich (Eds.) **Non-Governmental Organisations and Governments: Stakeholders for Development**, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris, 1993.

[3] Anthony Bebbington & Graham Thiele (Eds.), **Non-governmental Organisations and the State in Latin America: Rethinking Roles in Sustainable Agriculture**, Routledge, London 1993; John Farrington & Anthony Bebbington (Eds.) **Reluctant Partners: Non-governmental Organisations, the State and Sustainable Agricultural Development**, Routledge, London, 1993; John Farrington & David Lewis (Eds.), **Non-governmental Organisations and the State in Asia: Rethinking Roles in Sustainable Agriculture**, Routledge, London, 1993; Kate Wellard & James Copestake (Eds.), **Non-governmental Organisations and the State in Africa: Rethinking Roles in Sustainable Agriculture**,

by studies of individual NGOs,[4] as well as an expanding journal-based literature.

The new literature is a testament to the emergence of NGOs as important actors in the development process in Asia, Africa and Latin America. According to figures from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), NGOs transferred US$5.3bn. from industrial to developing countries in 1986,[5] nearly US$1b more than assistance provided by the International Development Association.[6] By 1990, the amount had reached $7.2bn., equivalent to 13% of net disbursements of official aid or 2.5% of total resource flows to developing countries.[7] Putting these figures into perspective however, a study by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) notes that "Even if NGOs were to treble their spending by the year 2000 they would still account for less than 20% of official aid flows".[8]

NGOs have acquired this financial role in a relatively short period of time; from low levels in absolute terms, official development assistance (ODA) disbursed through NGOs grew by 1400% in the ten years to 1985.[9] This relatively new financial role provides NGOs

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Routledge, London, 1993.

[4] For example, Maggie Black, **A Cause for Our Times: Oxfam, the first 50 years**, Oxfam and Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992; Kalima Rose, **Where Women Are Leaders: The SEWA Movement in India**, Zed Books, London, 1993; Catherine Lovell, **Breaking the Cycle of Poverty: the BRAC Strategy**, Kumarian Press, West Hartford, 1992.

[5] OECD, **Voluntary Aid for Development....**, pg. 81. Figures only apply to the 18 members of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC): Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States.

[6] **World Development Report 1991: The Challenge of Development**, World Bank and Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1991, pg. 136.

[7] **Human Development Report 1993**, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New York, and Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1993, pg. 93.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Hendrik Van der Heidjen, "The Reconciliation of NGO Autonomy, Program Integrity and Operational Effectiveness With Accountability to Donors", **World Development**, special

with significant organisational reach: according to one official estimate in 1985, the work of NGOs in the developing world benefitted almost 100m people.[10] The UNDP accepts that NGO organisational reach has expanded sharply since then and is now close to 250m people.[11] The implications of this growth and expansion are profound. According to Salamon, "...we are in the midst of a global 'associational revolution' that may prove to be as significant to the latter twentieth century as the rise of the nation-state was to the latter nineteenth".[12] This dissertation looks at the politics of this associational revolution in the Philippines and in this introductory chapter examines the political aspects of NGO activity in the developing world.

2. What is an NGO?

NGOs date to the middle of the nineteenth century and to a Europe strained by the industrial revolution and its by-products: nationalism, middle-class ascendency and the emergence of a stratified 'civil society'. Conservative forces and great power rivalry defeated the bourgeois rebellions of 1848, but by then the European state had developed "from absolutism to a system of countervailing powers", and the "frustrated revolutions... resulted in an effervescence of contacts between the peoples which had taken part in them".[13] Alexis

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supplement to Volume 15, 1987, pg. 104.

[10] According to the Club of Rome, "Southern" NGOs reach 60m people in Asia, 25m in Latin America and 12m in Africa. See Fisher, **The Road From Rio....**, pg. 8

[11] **Human Development Report 1993**, pg. 93.

[12] Lester M. Salamon, "The Rise of the Non-Profit Sector", **Foreign Affairs**, Vol. 73 No. 4, July/August 1994, pg. 109.

[13] J.J. Lador-Lederer, **International Non-Governmental Organisations and Economic Entities**, A. W. Sythoff, Leyden, 1963, pp. 17 & 61. Antonio Gramsci argued that the French Revolution played an important role in stimulating the proliferation of "clubs" or "loose organisations of the 'popular assembly' type" that maintained the "interest of a particular clientele that had no fixed boundaries" (Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (Eds), **Selections From the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci**, Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., London 1971, pg. 259).

De Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, Volume 1 of which was published in French in 1835, notes that Americans developed the right of association first imported from England and that a vast array of political associations developed as a result of individual initiative unfettered by the state.[14] The oldest "modern" NGO, the world alliance of Young Mens Christian Associations (YMCA) was established in 1855 while the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was established in 1863.[15] With the successive international crises of 1870, 1918 and 1945, the proliferation of such organisations quickened:[16] one study, for instance, of 546 international NGOs formed between 1846 and 1931 found that 9 were established between 1846 and 1865; 29 from 1866 to 1885; 96 from 1886 to 1905; 289 from 1906 to 1925 and 123 in the six years to 1931.[17]

Organisations associated with the international labour movement helped to establish the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 1928, but were known as "Private International Organisations" rather than NGOs.[18] Officially, the term "NGO" first appeared in the United Nations Charter of 1945. Organisations established independently of government were involved unofficially as consultants to some of the country delegations (especially the Unites States) at the San Francisco drafting convention, and the role of NGOs in the

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[14] Alexis De Tocqueville, **Democracy in America**, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1947.

[15] Japan's first "modern" foundation or NGO, the Society of Gratitude, was established in 1829, well before the first European or North American philanthropic organisations (Salomon, "The Rise of...", pg. 121).

[16] Lador-Lederer, **International Non-Governmental Organisations...**, pg. 61.

[17] Lyman C. White, **International Non-Governmental Organisations: Their Purposes, Methods, and Accomplishments**, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, 1951, pg. 279 n5.

[18] cf. Lyman C. White, **The Structure of Private International Organisations**, Philadelphia, 1933.

emerging United Nations system was explicitly recognised in Article 71 of the Charter.[19] By 1951, 87 international NGOs had secured consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).[20] As humanitarian relief poured into Europe after World War II, and gradually to the countries of the developing world from the early 1950s, and as national NGOs proliferated in the developing world, the term "NGO" achieved wide currency within the United Nations. By the 1960s, it was firmly established. Studies from the 1950s and 1960s were produced mainly by specialists in international law and as such concentrated on international NGOs.[21] Challenging the traditional view that international society was solely a society of states, and concerned with the role of NGOs as a countervailing force, they defined NGOs largely by distinguishing them from states. Lador-Lederer, for instance, describes them as non-governmental, non-profit-making, non-sovereign and non-ecclesiastical,[22] a broad definition which embraced trade unions, professional associations and youth groups etc. He cites a study of 1,937 NGOs published in 1954 which found NGOs mainly involved in: welfare (relief, education, youth and gender) (10.9%), medicine and health (9.7%), economics and finance (8.8%), commerce and industry (8%), pure sciences (6.8%), agriculture (5.52%), and labour (5.5%).[23]

In the 1980s, as development assistance flows to NGOs in the developing world began

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[19] Leland M. Goodrich and Edward Hambro, **Charter of the United Nations: Commentary and Documents**, World Peace Foundation, Boston MA, 1946, pg. 224. Article 71 reads "The Economic and Social Council may make suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organisations which are concerned with matters within its competence. Such arrangements may be made with international organisations and, where appropriate, with national organisations after consultation with the Member of the United Nations concerned".

[20] White, **International Non-Governmental Organisations...**, pg. vii.

[21] eg. White, **International Non-Governmental Organisations...**, 1951, or Lador-Lederer, **International Non-Governmental Organisations...**, 1963.

[22] Lador-Lederer, **International Non-Governmental Organisations...**, pg. 60.

[23] Ibid, pg. 62. The remaining 45% were distributed among 12 other groups.

to expand exponentially, the term "NGO" acquired a new meaning. As Landim notes, NGOs began consciously to think of their role in promoting development, and in society at large during the 1980s,[24] in contrast to earlier decades when an insufficient appreciation of the role of NGO action was largely due to NGOs themselves.[25] Drawing on the work of Padron, Landim defined NGOs as "...in general, private, non-profit organisations that are publicly registered (ie. have a legal status) whose principal function is to implement development projects favouring the popular sectors and which receive financial support".[26] As this definition implies, the new meaning referred to development NGOs, and specifically, to those working to address the structural causes of poverty. Today however many organisations in the developing world that describe themselves as NGOs are not engaged in socio-economic development, although they do describe their activities in terms of a development discourse eg. human rights organisations. Equally, many NGOs fail to address the structural causes of poverty, preferring to concentrate on more narrowly-defined objectives such as relief and rehabilitation. Therefore, NGOs are *private, non-profit, professional organisations with a distinctive legal character, concerned with public welfare goals*. As such, NGOs are:

1. Distinct from the state and other political institutions, in particular, political parties;

2. Non-profit making and readily distinguishable from private or public profit-making corporations;

3. Professional in character, with paid staff equipped with professional experience and/or training;

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[24] Leilah Landim, "Non-Governmental Organisations in Latin America", **World Development**, Special Supplement to Vol. 15, 1987, pg. 30.

[25] A point also made by Lador-Lederer, **International Non-Governmental Organisations...**, pg. 16.

[26] Ibid, drawing on Mario Padron, "Los centros de promocion y la cooperacion internacionale al desarrollo en America Latina", Mimeo, Buenos Aires, 1986.

4. Legally distinctive and as such distinguisable from organisations such as trade unions, media enterprises or industrial/agricultural co-operatives.[27]

5. Committed to collective or public welfare goals, rather than goals that benefit a narrow membership or constituency.[28]

6. Often, though not necessarily, membership based. More typically, they consist of a paid staff with a management committee, and are accountable mainly to funders.

This definition is problematic. As development assistance flows to NGOs in the developing world have increased and as social structures in developing countries have become increasingly differentiated, so the number and type of NGOs has increased. Fisher, for instance, suggests that there were at least 35,000 NGOs in the developing world in 1993,[29] though she also accepts that it is impossible at present to make an accurate assessment and numbers could well run into the hundreds of thousands.[30] Fisher is probably correct given the estimated number of NGOs of all kinds in particular countries, eg. Bangladesh (10,000+),[31] Brazil (110,000+),[32] India (100,000+/-),[33] Kenya (26,000),[34] and the

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[27] As with Landim's definition, this should usually mean that NGOs are registered with a state agency. However, the definition recognises that there will be circumstances in which NGOs will be unable to register, eg. under conditions of authoritarian rule.

[28] In the developing world public or collective welfare is synonymous with development or empowerment. Here however, public or collective welfare is used in a broader context to include humanitarian or charitable work.

[29] Fisher, **The Road From Rio...**, pg. 91.

[30] Ibid, pg. 23.

[31] "Cooperation with NGOs in Agriculture and Rural Development", Asian Development Bank (ADB), Manila, Vol. 1, August 1989, pg. 4.

[32] Fisher, **The Road From Rio...**, pg. 24.

[33] Farrington and Lewis, **Non-Governmental Organisations and the State in Asia...**, pp. 92-93.

[34] Alan Fowler, "The Role of NGOs in Changing State-Society Relations: Perspectives From Eastern and Southern Africa", **Development Policy Review**, Vol. 9 No. 1, 1991, pg. 55.

Philippines (20,000).[35]

The complexity is reflected in a number of ways. First, in particular countries, alternative labels are employed in place of the generic "NGO": eg. Private Voluntary Organisation (PVO) or Intermediate Organisation (IO) in the United States; Voluntary Organisation, or registered Charity in the United Kingdom; or Voluntary Agency (Volag) in India.

Second, the mainstream NGO literature recognises that since the late 1970s and 1980s, organisations such as trade unions, peasant associations, and water-users associations have redefined their roles and restructured their relationships with funders, clients, and members. In a number of countries in Asia, especially Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand, as well as in Africa, the term "People's Organisation" is used as a generic label for a diverse range of organisations that are not part of the state structure, are not engaged in normal commercial activity, and which relate their activities to a vibrant development discourse.[36] One definition of a People's Organisation (PO) is set out in Brown and Korten:

> self-reliant (its continued existence does not depend on outside initiative or funding) mutual benefit associations (it exists to serve its members) with a democratic structure and mode of operation (its members exercise the ultimate authority). Self-reliant co-operatives, landless associations, irrigation associations, credit clubs, trade associations and political interest groups with accountable leaderships are all examples...POs have a distinctive development role...they are both the training grounds and the institutional building blocks of a pluralistic democratic society.[37]

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[35] Karina Constantino-David, "The Need for Greater Unity and the CODE-NGO", in **Forging Unity Towards Development, Proceedings of the 1st National NGO Congress**, University of the Philippines Film Centre, Diliman, Quezon City, 4 December 1991, pg. 9.

[36] With respect to Asia, see for instance, Farrington and Lewis (Eds.), **Non-Governmental Organisations and the State in Asia...**; or "Cooperation with NGOs....", Volumes 1 & 2, ADB. With respect to Africa, see, for instance, Alan Fowler, "The Role of NGOs...", 1991.

[37] David L. Brown and David C. Korten, "The Role of Voluntary Organisations in Development", Institute for Development Research, Boston MA, 1989, pg. 15.

A more succinct definition however is that they are *local, non-profit, membership-based associations which organise and mobilise in support of collective welfare goals*. In general, POs are:

1. Distinct from the state and from other political institutions, in particular, political parties;

2. Non-profit-making and readily distinguishable from private and public profit-making corporations;[38]

3. Reliant on voluntary effort rather than paid professional staff, especially at the local level;

4. Legally distinctive, though less so than NGOs. They may be registered with more than one state agency or may be unregistered;

5. Committed to securing benefits for their particular membership though they still articulate their aims and objectives within a development discourse. Others pursue public or collective welfare goals;

6. Primarily membership-based and democratically accountable.[39]

Although the NGO/PO distinction is now accepted in much of the NGO literature,[40] a number of alternative labels are often applied. Carroll distinguishes between Grassroots Support Organisations (GSOs) and Membership Support Organisations (MSOs) while Fisher distinguishes between Grass-roots Support Organisations (GRSOs) and Grass-roots Organisations (GROs)[41] (See Figure 1). Although POs are normally traditional organisations, new types of structures dating from the early 1970s are also regarded as POs in the

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[38] POs often aim to realise a surplus but this is usually retained to build savings, rather than distributed to members.

[39] An alternative list of the characteristics of NGOs and POs is set out in Erle-Frayne D. Argonza. "The Rise of People's Organisations", **Solidarity**, No. 127, July-September 1990, pg. 98.

[40] For example, Korten, **Getting To the 21st Century...**, pg. 2, or Karina Constantino-David, "The Philippine Experience in Scaling Up" in Edwards & Hulme (Eds.), **Making a Difference...**, pg. 137.

[41] Carroll, **Intermediary NGOs...**, pp. 9-15; Fisher, **The Road From Rio...**, pp. 5-18.

mainstream literature, eg. Basic Christian Communities (known also as Base Communities or Basic Ecclesial Communities), Popular Economic Organisations (PEOs, a distinctively Latin American category) or Community-Based Organisations (CBOs).

Third, complex coalition-building strategies in many countries give rise to distinctions on the basis of NGO/PO geographical or sectoral focus: a primary NGO or PO engages in direct programme work; a secondary NGO/PO is a regional or sectoral (and in countries with small NGO/PO movements, national) network of primary NGOs/POs; a tertiary NGO or PO is a national-level federation of regional or sectoral NGO/PO networks.

Fourth, rigorous analyses of NGO action now categorise NGOs by origin or function. One of the most sophisticated is set out in Carroll, based on an empirical study of Latin American NGOs. Carroll's typology corresponds closely with Constantino-David's typology of Philippine NGOs (see figure 2).[42] Other typologies are set out in Korten[43] (see figure 2), Fisher[44] and Friedmann.[45] A number of vivid acronyms have also achieved wide currency, for instance: BINGO (Big NGO); BONGO (Business Oriented NGO); INGO (International NGO); LINGO (Little NGO); GRINGO (Government Run or Inspired NGO) (also known as GONGO (Government Organised NGO); and QUANGO (Quasi- or Quasi Autonomous NGO).

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[42] Carroll, ibid, pg. 14; Karina Constantino-David, "The Limits and Possibilities of Philippine NGOs in Development", paper presented to the LAMBATLAYA National Conference on "Networking in the '90s: Affirming the Commitment to the Decade of Nationalism", University of the Philippines, 22-24 November 1990, pp. 1-3.

[43] Korten, **Getting to the 21st Century...**, pg. 2.

[44] Fisher, **The Road From Rio...**, pg. 99.

[45] Jonathan Friedmann, **Empowerment: The Politics of Alternative Development**, Blackwell Press, Oxford, 1992, pg. 146.

Figure 1. NGOs and POs: Alternative Labels

Korten, Constantino-David	Non-governmental Organisation (NGO)	Peoples Organisation (PO)
Carroll	Grassroots Support Organisation (GSO)	Membership Support Organisation (MSO)
Fisher	Grass-roots Support Organisation (GRSO)	Grassroots Organisation (GRO)

Figure 2. NGO and PO Typologies.

Carroll (GSOs/MSOs)	Korten (NGOs)	Constantino-David (NGOs)
. Church-Inspired . Business-Inspired . Government promoted civic collaboration . Professional/ technical service . Public Service contracting . Ethnic advocacy & representation . Environmental . Academic . Land reform beneficiary association	. Voluntary organisations . Public Service contractors . People's Organisations . Governmental NGOs (GONGOS)	. People's Organisations and co-operatives . Social development agencies . Church-related organisations . academe-based organisations . business sector . civic-professional organisations

Sources: See footnotes 42-44.

Organisational complexity and diversity raise questions concerning the global NGO community's coherence. One body of opinion from a neoliberal perspective and inspired by organisational theory refers to a "third sector", operating between the public and private sectors.[46] The categorisation is flawed however. Firstly, it is based on the assertion that service delivery represents the predominant component of NGO action. Secondly, such assertions are often motivated by an explicitly normative interpretation of the significance of NGO action. Korten for instance argues that

> It is becoming evident that the hope for dealing with the global development crisis rests not with the development industry, but with the great social movements of contemporary society including the peace, environment, women and human rights movements. It rests with people who are driven by a strong social commitment rather than by the budgetary imperatives of huge global bureaucracies. It rests in particular with the more forward-looking non-governmental organisations (NGOs) of the South that find themselves immersed in the political environment and economic struggles of the poor with whom they work and that lack the luxury of closing their eyes to the real nature of the problem[47].

Along similar lines, Friedmann sees NGOs as the key to the politics of alternative development, more than a set of technical prescriptions, but rather an ideology underpinned by "a certain moral coherence".[48] Both Korten and Friedmann take an exaggeratedly instrumentalist view of NGO action. In reality, the heterogeneity of the NGO movement, and its flexible and dynamic character, make it easy for other political forces to establish, infiltrate or co-opt NGOs. The global NGO movement and the NGO communities of particular developing countries are far from united and as a result, NGO action is effectively

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[46] See, for instance, Norman Uphoff, "Grassroots Organisations and NGOs in Rural Development: Opportunities with Diminishing States and Expanding Markets", **World Development**, Vol. 21 No. 4, 1993, pg. 609. According to Fisher, **The Road From Rio...**, pg. 8, the term "third sector" was first suggested by Waldemar Nielsen in **The Endangered Sector**, Columbia University Press, New York, 1979. Fisher however prefers the term "Independent Sector" (see pp. 8-10).

[47] Korten, **Getting to the 21st Century...**, pp. ix-x.

[48] Friedmann, **Empowerment...**, pg. 8.

an arena within which important political battles from society at large are internalized. Herein lies a conundrum that underscores the essentially political character of NGO action in the developing world. And herein also lies the primary justification for a study of the politics of NGO action in the developing world.

3. NGOs and Political Science

From a political science perspective, the mainstream NGO literature has a number of characteristics which undermine its utility in analyzing the politics of NGO action in the developing world.[49] First, it is predominantly neo-liberal in its analysis of the failings of the state in undermining rural poverty and the consequent role of NGOs in delivering social services to the rural poor cheaply, efficiently and accurately. From this perspective, NGOs are seen primarily as a channel for promoting economic and social development and secondarily as agents of the political empowerment and the democratization of politics. To a large extent, this view reflects the interests of multi-lateral, governmental and non-government agencies in funding research.

The NGO research agenda is largely donor-driven.[50] Few donors are concerned

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[49] The mainstream NGO literature includes works listed in footnotes 2-3. Other prominent works include: Judith Tendler, "Turning Private Voluntary Organisations into Development Agencies: Questions for Evaluation", Program Evaluation Paper No. 12, United States Agency for international Development, Washington DC., 1982; Milton J. Esman and Norman T. Uphoff, **Local Organisations: Intermediaries in Rural Development**, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1984; Albert O. Hirschman, **Getting Ahead Collectively: Grassroots Experiences in Latin America**, Pergamon Press, New York, 1984; Norman T. Uphoff, **Local Institutional Development: An Analytical Sourcebook With Cases**, Kumarian Press, West Hartford CT., 1986.

[50] For instance, the OECD's **Voluntary Aid for Development...**; Clark, **Democratizing Development...** (research funded by Oxfam); Edwards and Hulme (Eds.), **Making a Difference...** (funded largely by the Save the Children Fund); Carroll, **Intermediary NGOs...** (funded largely by the Inter-American Foundation); Holloway (Ed.), Doing Development... (funded by CUSO (formerly the Canadian University Services Organisation)) and the 1993 four-volume series by Farrington, Bebbington et al, funded by

with the political complexities of NGO action and in many cases are anxious to ignore them. NGOs in the developed world are frequently restricted from funding political activities such as advocacy, campaigning, and coalition building. Many donors are also reluctant to acknowledge that funding to NGOs in developing countries frequently aimed or aims to strengthen opposition to authoritarian regimes. Others are wary of reactions from domestic constituencies and are reluctant to acknowledge the explicitly political nature of contemporary NGO action. Other donors avoid openly discussing the relationship between foreign-funded NGOs and political parties, especially those which espouse armed opposition to the state.

The second characteristic is an emphasis on the "newness" of NGO action, and a corresponding failure to relate NGO origins to other organisational forms. As a result, there is little appreciation in the literature of the connection between the growth and proliferation of NGOs and the expansion of their roles, to changes in the structure of polities, economies and societies in the developing world.

Third, there is a strongly normative, De Tocquevillian, character to assumptions in the literature that NGO movements in the developing world strengthen civil society and consolidate the "return" to democratic rule. In reality, there is little concrete evidence that NGOs can or do strengthen civil society.[51]

Fourth, the focus on rural development in the mainstream NGO literature, especially at the grassroots level, diverts attention from NGOs that are not concerned with rural development, not based in rural areas, and which are not locally-focussed. Emphasising its

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the Overseas Development Institute.

[51] In one of the first detailed studies of NGO politics in a developing country, Fowler argues that Kenya's NGO community is unable to hasten fundamental political change. One of the main reasons is its fragmentation, lack of cohesion, competitiveness, and unrepresentative structure. In general, Fowler argues, NGOs are more likely to maintain the status quo than to change it (Alan Fowler, "Non-Governmental Organisations and the Promotion of Democracy in Kenya", Ph.D. thesis, University of Sussex, December 1993).

normative character, the NGO literature also focuses on the potential of NGO-state collaboration, at the expense of a proper appreciation of the dilemmas facing NGOs in intervening in political debates.

By concentrating on the role of NGOs as social development agencies, the contemporary NGO literature has obscured the significant political character of NGOs (through their antecedent, the civic or political association) noted in political philosophy. Writing in the early years of nineteenth century, G.W.F. Hegel argued that the state was morally superior to civil society. Equating the state with *de facto* power, Hegel argued that political parties and associations were inextricably bound to the state.[52] De Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* represented a major counterpoint. In 1835, de Tocqueville pointed to the relationship between political associations organised independently of the state and democratic governence as a key characteristic of American democracy. "There are no countries in which associations are more needed to prevent the despotism of a faction or the arbitrary power of a prince", he wrote, "than those which are democratically constituted".[53] Imprisoned between 1929 and 1935, Antonio Gramsci revived Hegel's view of political parties and associations as "the 'private' woof of the state".[54] Civic organisations, Gramsci wrote, were a central component in civil society, but they also helped to maintain the social hegemony of a dominant class.[55] Gramsci was certainly aware of the spread of civic organisations in North America and Europe but had yet to grapple with its implications.[56]

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[52] George Sabine, **A History of Political Theory**, Henry Holt and Co., New York, 1970, Chapter XXX.

[53] De Tocqueville, **Democracy in America**, pg. 111.

[54] Hoare and Nowell-Smith (Eds.), **Selections from the Prison Notebooks...**, pg. 259.

[55] Ibid, pp. 264-265.

[56] Gramsci for instance notes the activities of Rotary Clubs and the YMCA. Although he notes the arrival of the YMCA in Italy, he adds little beyond mention of its American roots (ibid, pg. 286).

His critique of pragmatism extended to criticism of voluntary organisations, but overall his argument implied that civic organisations did little to alter class structure.[57]

White's 1951 study distinguished NGOs from pressure groups. While many existed to promote the interests of a particular group, White noted, most INGOs functioned as agents of international understanding and as moulders of public opinion at a national and international level.[58] Similarly, Lador-Lederer's 1963 study suggested that NGOs were more accurately seen as non-*state* organisations, since they were intimately involved in governmental and inter-governmental processes.[59] Diverging slightly from White's position however, he argued that NGOs (broadly defined) constituted "the main social countervailing power to the state", and that as such, functioned mainly as pressure groups.[60] Lador-Lederer also noted that NGOs were not restricted by obligations that fall on the state, and as such "may feel they have more in common with movements fighting certain regimes or certain institutions than with certain governments".[61]

The blame for obscuring the political character of NGO action should not fall on the authors of the contemporary NGO literature alone. Political scientists have consistently and for decades ignored the political character and dynamics of NGO action.[62] Greenstein and

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[57] Refering to the Rotary Clubs, he writes "...we are not dealing with a new type of civilization [here]. This is shown by the fact that nothing has changed in the character of and the relationships between fundamental groups" (ibid, pg. 318).

[58] White, **International Non-Governmental Organisations...**, pg. 18.

[59] Lador-Laderer, **International Non-Governmental Organisations...**, pg. 13.

[60] Ibid, pg. 60.

[61] Ibid, pg. 217.

[62] Studies of international development NGOs represent an exception. See for instance, Brian H. Smith, **More Than Altruism: The Politics of Private Foreign Aid**, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1990; or Peter J. Burnell, **Charity, Politics and the Third World**, Harvester Wheatsheaf, London, 1991. For a more recent exception, see Tom Princen and Matthias Finger, **Environmental NGOs in World Politics: linking the global and the local**, Routledge, London, 1994.

Polsby's 1975 8-volume encyclopedia of political science makes no reference to NGOs.[63] In the late 1980s and early 1990s, amid the collapse of authoritarian regimes throughout the developing world, catapulting NGOs into more prominent positions in political debates and contests, the tradition of ignorance is continued in literature on third world politics.[64] The NGO literature identifies important questions however, and when related to significant relevant concerns in political science literature, suggests a research agenda which is complemented by country- or issue-specific NGO studies.

In the contemporary NGO literature, the emphasis on socio-economic roles has not gone unquestioned. Bratton, for example, has suggested that it is in the political sphere rather than the economic, that the contributions of NGOs to development should be mainly seen.[65] Poverty, he argues, is a political as well as an economic condition:[66]

> [It] arises because people do not have access to power; this is, the capacity to do what they want and win compliance from others. Poor people have little or no control over the material and institutional conditions under which they exist. They experience great difficulty in making decisions about their lives. In short, the poor lack the political 'clout' to make their preferences 'stick'.[67]

Bratton's position finds influential support in a 1993 UNDP study which argues that NGOs compliment state attempts to eradicate poverty and provide social services, but that advocacy

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[63] Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby (Eds.), **Handbook of Political Science**, 8 volumes, Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., Reading MA, 1975.

[64] An argument based on a cursory survey of some recent texts on third world politics published in Britain: Christopher Clapham, **Third World Politics: An Introduction**, Routledge, 1988 edition; James Manor (Ed.), **Rethinking Third World Politics**, Longman, London, 1991; Paul Cammack, David Pool, and William Tordoff, **Third World Politics: A Comparative Introduction**, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2nd edition, 1993; Mehran Kamrava, **Politics and Society in the Third World**, Routledge, London, 1993; Robert Pinkney, **Democracy in the Third World**, Open University Press, Buckingham, 1993.

[65] Michael Bratton, "The Politics of Government-NGO Relations in Africa", **World Development**, Vol. 17 No. 4, 1989, pg. 569.

[66] A proposition argued at greater length in Friedmann, **Empowerment...**, Chapter 4.

[67] Bratton, "The Politics of Government-NGO Relations...", pg. 569.

is, and will continue to be, their greatest strength.[68] The World Bank also points to the political potential of NGOs. "Non-governmental organisations", the Bank notes, "have become an important force in the development process, [mitigating] the costs of developing countries' institutional weaknesses which often include administrative shortcomings, and an inability to carry out essential development tasks".[69]

Given the socio-economic thrust to the mainstream NGO literature, and the absence of analysis of NGO action in the mainstream literature on third world politics, these propositions remain largely untested. Esman and Uphoff's 1984 study of local organisations, for instance, revealed that 19% of their case-studies could be classified as local development associations, 46% as interest associations and 35% as co-operatives. The second of these classifications points to the explicitly political nature of NGO action.[70] Furthermore, the UNDP argues that NGOs proliferated more rapidly in Chile than in any other Latin American country as a direct result of military repression under the Pinochet dictatorship.[71] Yet, as Echeverri-Gent notes, the politics of development literature provides few clues as to why NGOs come into existence.[72] The inevitable result is a proliferation of hesitant or heavily qualified assertions, such as Donnelly's suggestion that human rights NGOs in Chile and Argentina "*may* have played a role in the failure to stabilise military rule" during the 1970s and '80s (italics added).[73]

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[68] **Human Development Report 1993**, pg. 98.

[69] **World Development Report 1991...**, pp. 135-136.

[70] Esman and Uphoff, **Local Organisations...**, pg. 62.

[71] **Human Development Report 1993**, pg. 92.

[72] John Echeverri-Gent, **The State and the Poor: Public Policy and Political Development in India and the United States**, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1993, pg. 189.

[73] Jack Donnelly, **International Human Rights**, Westview Press, Boulder CO, 1993, pg. 50. Hirschman, **Getting Ahead Collectively...**, pg. 98, in more outspoken terms, argues that it is impossible to prove a connection between the withering of the authoritarian state in Latin America and the rise of NGOs and grassroots social movements.

Despite the socio-economic emphasis, the mainstream NGO literature illustrates certain political roles that NGOs play. Clark, for instance, notes that in India and Bangladesh, NGOs are forcing through reform-oriented legislation in areas such as minimum wages, feudalism and bonded labour.[74] Furthermore, Viswanath suggests that NGOs have become an effective institutional vehicle for undermining the economic impoverishment of women, especially in rural areas, and are potentially a significant means of undermining their political disempowerment.[75] Bebbington and Thiele note that in Chile during the 1970s, NGOs filled an institutional vacuum when political parties were banned and university funding was cut back. For many professionals, NGOs offered the only viable hope of pursuing political goals and securing employment.[76]

4. NGOs and the State

Elaborating the political roles identified in the NGO literature requires an examination of state-NGO relationships. In both authoritarian and post-authoritarian polities, three basic political postures are open to NGOs. The first is to enter into a strategic alliance with local or national government agencies with a view to confronting traditional power structures which have inhibited development and popular empowerment. This strategy will normally be pursued when NGOs feel government agencies have consolidated their immediate position, that there is a degree of unity of purpose between reform-oriented ministries and those concerned with security, and that they place a priority on establishing new institutional ties with the poor. NGOs will also pursue this approach where they sense opportunities to

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[74] Clark, **Democratizing Development...**, pg. 5.

[75] Vanita Viswanath, **NGOs and Women's Development in Rural South India: A Comparative Analysis**, Westview Press, Boulder, 1991.

[76] Bebbington and Thiele, **Nongovernmental Organisations and the State in Latin America...**, pg. 38.

replace patronage-based with issue-based political agendas, especially in the electoral arena. The second is to remain at a distance from the state, avoid co-optation, concentrate on effective service delivery, and defend the limited political space available. This strategy will normally be pursued when NGOs feel the government is intrinsically authoritarian or when reformers are opposed by conservatives, jeopardising regime stability. It assumes that politics remains patronage-based and that little opportunity exists for issue-based political contestation. The third is to aggressively exploit fissures in regime cohesion in an attempt to expand the political space available for popular organising. Such a strategy may be pursued when NGOs fear an imminent crack-down, where a state is weak and vulnerable to capture by conservative authoritarian forces, or where NGOs attempt, as part of a larger political project, to create a base from which to challenge for state power. Often, the approach involves militant pressure politics supported by an electoral strategy. In reality, NGOs, collectively and individually, pursue aspects of more than one strategy.

5. The Politics of NGO-State Collaboration

In India, the state has long viewed NGOs as potential partners in developing the country's economic and political structure, especially in rural areas. India's struggle for independence resulted in a commitment from 1947 to a welfare and socialist state with a mixed economy. In 1952, the government involved NGOs in health and educational service provision in the first Five-Year Plan.[77] The same year, it launched the Community Development Programme to institutionalize village-level political participation, and later launched a three-tier system of rural co-operatives (*Panchayati Raj*). As Migdal notes

[77] Achim Brosch, "The Discourse on Non-Governmental Organisations and the Political Economy of Development in India", M.A. dissertation, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, September 1990, pg. 15.

"[Jawaharal] Nehru [India's first post-independence Prime Minister] and his planners hoped co-operative farming along with peasant-dominated *panchayat* institutions would link peasants directly to the state without the influence of intermediaries on the disposition of goods and services".[78]

Beyond the state, parallel attempts to encourage participation were also initiated. In 1952, Jawaharal Nehru founded the *Bharat Sevak Samaj* (Society of the Servants of India) to mobilise communities and promote local development. Established as a non-governmental initiative, the movement became dependent on state funding and evolved into a quasi-governmental structure that eventually floundered in the late 1960s. In another approach, Mahatma Gandhi encouraged supporters to donate land title deeds to the village assembly, the *Grama Sabha* to encourage local participatory democracy.[79]

Governmental and non-governmental schemes however both failed. With the latter, the small relative scale eroded any hope of wide-ranging impact. With the former, the lack of a commitment or capacity to challenge the position of the dominant land-owning castes, a powerful force in the Indian National Congress,[80] as well as the Congress's sense of its own superiority over other forms of political association, eroded any sense of substance in the government's strategy, reducing it to the level of rhetoric. Yet the initiatives did contribute to a climate which enabled later governments to involve NGOs in rural

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[78] Joel S. Migdal, **Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World**, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1988, pg. 251.

[79] A. P. Fernandez, "NGOs in South Asia: People's Partnership and Participation", **World Development**, Special supplement to Vol. 15, 1987.

[80] Migdal notes that "[the] Triangle of Accommodation forged by rich peasants, the state's regional politicians and implementors and the Congress party personnel....resulted not only in hefty voter turnouts for Nehru's Congress but also in rules of the game at the local level that mocked the intent of the state's cooperative agricultural policy and reinforced the strongmen inimical to Nehru's purposes" (**Strong Societies and Weak States...**, pg. 251).

development programmes.

By the late 1980s, one of the most significant examples of co-operation between state and NGOs in the developing world was set out in the Indian government's seventh Five-Year Plan (1985-1990), in which the government planned to channel Rs2b (US$150m) through NGOs.[81] NGOs were given three main roles in promoting rural development: acting as intermediaries between governmental development programmes and the people; mobilizing local resources; and organising the poor to ensure the accountability of village-level officials.[82] The Asian Development Bank (ADB) notes that the government had clear strategic objectives in assigning these roles:

> The government, recognising on the one hand the positive reputation of NGOs and on the other, the problem of local vested interests and the limitations of its own bureaucracy, has called upon NGOs to help create a "countervailing force" amongst the poor via the organisation of beneficiary groups.[83]

The strategic nature of the objective is readily apparent in Migdal's account of the dilemma facing successive post-independence governments:

> Even as the Congress party sought to develop as a parallel state in the colonial period, it lacked direct access to the mass of India's population, the peasants. After independence, the party relied heavily on strongmen of one sort or another to deliver the vote. Of particular importance have been the rich peasants who have not only asserted their social control locally but also as a group have become effective lobbies at the federal level and key players in party politics. The nexus of relationship among the state, party and strongmen, the Triangle of Accommodation, ultimately defined the character of India's state agencies' activities at the local and regional level. Even when Indira Gandhi sought in the 1970s to free herself of her dependence on strongmen, particularly the rich peasants, and to appeal directly to the electorate, the accommodation proved impossible to

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[81] "Cooperation with NGOs...", ADB, Vol. 1, pg. 57; Echeverri-Gent, **The State and the Poor...**, pg. 187.

[82] Brosch, "The Discourse on Non-Governmental Organisations...in India", pg. 16.

[83] "Co-operation with NGOs...", ADB, Vol. 2, pg. 30.

overcome without suffering unacceptable costs in terms of political stability.[84]

By the early 1990s, NGOs had become significant allies of the government in eroding "Triangles of Accommodation". An estimated 15,000 to 20,000 NGOs were actively engaged in rural development,[85] and annual NGO revenue from abroad at Rs9b (US$520m), was equivalent to approximately 25% of official development assistance flows into India. When contributions from government to NGOs were taken into account, the annual income of Indian NGOs, Rs10b, was equivalent to 10% of the government's anti-poverty expenditure.[86] Echeverri-Gent notes that "Without a prior distribution of the bases of political power, the state is unlikely to provide poverty alleviation programs with sufficient resources to improve their plight relative to other groups",[87] but there is tentative evidence that such a redistribution is being facilitated by NGO action. In Andhra Pradesh, Action for Welfare and Awakening (AWARE) has had a profound impact on local politics. With tens of thousands of members, it has influenced state legislation in key areas including land reform.[88] One of India's largest NGOs, with a staff of approximately 1,500 complemented by a volunteer force of 25,000 including professionals, AWARE has formed almost 2000 village organisations which have brought 23,320 acres of land under cultivation.[89] By 1986, three quarters of a million people had benefitted from its social action program.[90]

In Bangladesh, one of the most densely populated countries in the world with one

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[84] Migdal, **Strong Societies and Weak States...**, pg. 250.

[85] Farrington and Lewis (Eds.), **Non-Governmental Organisations and the State in Asia...**, pg. 92.

[86] Ibid, pg. 93.

[87] Echeverri-Gent, **The State and the Poor...**, pg. 186.

[88] See Clark, **Democratizing Development...**, pg. 113.

[89] "Cooperation with NGOs...", Asian Development Bank, Vol. 1, pg. 84.

[90] Ibid.

of the lowest rates of urbanisation and of per capita GNP, the acute nature of the socio-economic challenges facing the government puts an even higher premium on potential state-NGO strategic alliances. Rural development NGOs have been involved in successive five year plans since the first (1973-1978) and under the regime of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (1971-1975), NGOs proliferated with the influx of foreign aid following the civil war and famine. Under the regimes of Presidents Zia (1975-1981) and Ershad (1982-1990) however, relations deteriorated as NGO action broadened beyond relief and rehabilitation to encompass popular organising and as the state became more authoritarian and corrupt. As a result, NGO-state collaboration was weaker than in India, and the NGO sector developed autonomously to become a virtual parallel state capable of reaching 10% to 20% of the poor[91] (roughly 13m to 26m people). Although foreign aid to NGOs of US$100m amounted to only 5% of total ODA flows to Bangladesh,[92] resources mobilised nationally and locally increased their economic importance. Following elections in 1991, and the widespread expectations which they generated, NGOs represented potentially strategic partners in government attempts to stimulate sustainable rural development and institutionalize popular participation capable of anchoring a democratic regime. The new regime gave important advisory positions to NGO leaders with rural development experience and, as a result, NGOs acquired significant influence over government rural development policy.[93] Yet overall, NGO-state strategic alliances are inhibited by the fragmented and personalist nature of the political-party system and the use of patronage by the government to maintain parliamentary support.[94] In such circumstances, NGOs are disinclined to forge relationships with the state since they see little

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[91] **Human Development Report 1993**, pg. 92.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Ibid.

[94] See J.C. Johari et al, **Governments and Politics of South Asia**, Link Press, New Delhi, 1991, pg. 409.

opportunity for pro-reform issue-based debate.

In Chile, a tentative alliance between NGOs and the state was established after the election of President Alwyin in 1990. First, as Hojman notes, "NGOs played a central role in guaranteeing [the] successful transition [to democracy in 1990]...by supporting...the democratic opposition to the military regime and putting forward...policy proposals which would eventually constitute a fundamental component of the incoming democratic government programme".[95] Second, many Chilean development NGOs were established in the 1970s by professionals dismissed from the state sector and development NGOs represented a reservoir of skills on which the government could draw.[96] As a result, the Aylwin administration brought in leaders and staff from NGOs and associated think-tanks to fill ministerial and administrative positions to purge the power of the Pinochet *apparatchiks* and give momentum to reform in agriculture and other sectors. Third, because of budget constraints, the government subcontracted partial responsibility for agricultural development and support services to NGOs.[97] A redistributive land reform programme was implemented in Chile in the 1960s and beneficiaries to this day rely on support services. In response, the governmental Institute of Agrarian Development (INDAP) planned to use NGOs to quadruple from 25,000 to 100,000 by the end of 1994 the number of peasant farmers receiving technical

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[95] David E. Hojman, "Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the Chilean Transition to Democracy", **European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies**, 54, June 1993, pg. 7. NGOs based in academe played a central role in this respect. See David E. Hojman, **Chile: The Political Economy of Development and Democracy in the 1990s**, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1993, pp. 44-48.

[96] David E. Hojman, "Introduction" in David E. Hojman (Ed.), **Neo-Liberal Agriculture in Rural Chile**, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1990, pg. 3.

[97] David E. Hojman, "Introduction" in David E. Hojman (Ed.), **Change in the Chilean Countryside: From Pinochet to Aylwin and Beyond**, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1993, pg. 7

and other assistance.[98] Fourth, the government saw NGOs as important allies in its efforts to decentralise and reduce the state apparatus. NGOs absorbed important service delivery functions when the Pinochet regime implemented neo-liberal economic reforms which cut government expenditure on social services. As a result, urban and rural NGOs were well placed to act as sub-contractors. In addition, local elections were held in 1992 and intermediary NGOs supported Popular Economic Organisations (PEOs, *Organizaciones Economicas Populares*) and Self-help Organisations (SHOs, *Organizaciones de Auto-Ayuda*) to participate in local government structures.

An explanation for the relatively advanced nature of NGO-state collaboration in Chile is offered by Hojman:

> A relatively higher degree of urbanisation, a stronger political culture and a larger and more influential middle-class were all both cause and consequence of the fact that before 1973, democracy survived for longer and civil society was more developed [than any other country in Latin America]. This is a virtuous circle. A stronger civil society and middle sectors before 1973 meant that after the 1973 military coup the development of NGOs was more substantial which itself meant that after the democratic transition in 1990 civil society emerged more vigorously than elsewhere in Latin America.[99]

Major obstacles however undermine this strategic alliance. Given the fractious nature of Chilean political culture, the Chilean NGO sector is highly fragmented and politicised; government overtures to one NGO alienates others and ensures a relatively small number to whom the government can turn for support. Chilean NGOs also have a mixed record for effective service delivery. Berdegue, for instance, notes that development NGOs are highly concentrated (especially in Regions VIII and IX) and that most peasant families participating

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[98] Cristobal Kay, "The Agrarian Policy of the Aylwin Government: Continuity or Change?", in ibid, pg. 28.

[99] Hojman, "...NGOs and the Chilean Transition to Democracy", pg. 21.

in NGO programmes have not achieved production and living standards significantly different from their non-participant neighbours.[100] Third, NGOs still have a limited reach, undermining the extent to which the state can view them as strategic partners with the ability to bring large groups within a social coalition: one estimate from the mid-1980s, for instance, suggests that PEOs reach only 120,000 people in the capital Santiago, 2% of the population of 5m.[101]

Overall, as the examples discussed above indicate, neither the NGO literature nor the political science literature examines the dynamics of strategic state-NGO alliances in any degree of depth. And yet a number of important questions are obvious: To what extent are the relationships being forged between NGOs and states "strategic", ie. to what extent do they undermine deep-rooted obstacles to the betterment and empowerment of the poor, including the patronage basis of politics?; to what extent are objectives achieved?; what are the mechanisms employed by states and NGOs to forge strategic alliances and to pursue stated objectives?; and finally, how important are NGO-state relationships in the context of a plethora of institutional relationships pursued both by state agencies and NGOs? This dissertation examines these questions.

6. The Politics of Autonomy and Co-optation

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[100] Julio A. Berdegue, "Non-Governmental Development Programmes for the Peasant sector: A Critical Review" in Hojman (Ed.), **Change in the Chilean Countryside...**, pp. 165-166.

[101] See Charles Downs, Giorgio Solimano, Carlos Vergara and Luis Zuniga (Eds.), **Social Policy From The Grassroots: Nongovernmental Organisations in Chile**, Westview Press, Boulder, 1989, pg. 201. Lehmann however cites another study which estimates that 200,000 people in Santiago benefit from the work of *organizaciones de sobrevivencia* (survival organisations)(David Lehmann, **Democracy and Development in Latin America: Economics, Politics and Religion in the Post-War Period**, Polity Press, London, 1990, pg. 179).

Samuel Huntington once wrote that "The problem [in modernising countries] is not to hold elections but to create organisations. In many, if not most..., elections serve only to enhance the power of disruptive and often reactionary social forces and to tear down the structure of public authority".[102] The argument points to both a dilemma and a dynamic at the heart of politics. In Taiwan, the fortuitous combination of an American-enforced radical redistributive land reform programme and the legacy from the Japanese colonial period of strong farmer or producer associations organised by government officials enabled the state to co-opt land reform beneficiaries within a social coalition.[103] As Haggard notes, the pursuit of industrialization accompanied a relative political weakening of elite agricultural interests and the redistribution of land created rural support for the regime.[104] What Haggard doesn't say however was that the institutional character of that support, with direct links between the state and the rural organisations, and the relative absence of elite patronage spoiling of that character, were crucial to this strategy.

In South and South-East Asia, post-independence governments inherited less egalitarian land structures. They also encountered powerful rural elites that intervened in attempts by the state to seek support directly from the poor and disempowered. These elites penetrated state machinery directly through the electoral process and the perpetuation of patronage politics. Today, faced with the problem of what Migdal calls "fragmented social control";[105] governments try to mediate and aggregate the interests of elite agricultural

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[102] Samuel Huntington, **Political Order In Changing Societies**, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1968, pg. 7.

[103] On the farmer/producer associations and their roles, See Joseph A. Yager, **Transforming Agriculture in Taiwan: The Experience of the Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction**, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1988, especially Chapter 8.

[104] Stephen Haggard, **Pathways From The Periphery: The Politics of Growth in the Newly Industrializing Countries**, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1990, pp. 35-36.

[105] Migdal, **Strong Societies, Weak States...**, pg. 257.

organisations and the less powerful organisations representing the poor.

As a result, Asian governments instinctively relate to NGOs by trying to control and co-opt them, wedding them to government positions on key development concerns, often successfully. In India for instance, the government established the Council for Rural Technology (CART) in 1986 to strengthen the technological capacity of rural development initiatives. In September 1986, as part of the Seventh Five Year Plan's thrust of involving NGOs more closely in rural development projects, the government merged Peoples Action for Development India (PADI), a governmental organisation which funded rural development NGO programmes, and CART to form the Council for the Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART). In theory CAPART had the twin aims of involving NGOs more closely in rural development and using them to promote technological innovation, but in practice it became a mechanism to coordinate government funding to rural development NGOs.[106] The bulk of rural development NGOs remained wary of CAPART however. While formally asserting its independence from government, CAPART was administered as a functional wing of the Ministry of Rural Development, provoking distrust.[107] CAPART's role in channelling funding has also provoked concern about its potential to control the rural development NGO sector, while NGOs also resent the government view of NGOs as sub-contractors rather than partners.

An even greater source of tension between NGOs and the Indian government was the establishment in 1986 of the Council of Voluntary Agencies. Included in the Council's mandate was the preparation of a "Code of Conduct", which, when drafted, called for NGOs to be made financially accountable, and to be barred from promoting commercial or political

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[106] Farrington and Lewis (Eds), **Non-Governmental Organisations and the State in Asia...**, pg. 95.

[107] See Fernandez, "NGOs in South Asia...", pg. 44.

interests (precluding NGOs from joining political parties or holding elective office at local or national level). By the end of 1986 however, over 50 meetings had been held throughout India and as a result of the opposition, the government was unable to implement the code. Despite the backdown, many Indian NGOs remained worried by what Tandon describes as "... the growing role of the state and state-ism in India" over the last 30 to 40 years, and a corresponding "...shrinking role for voluntarism and voluntary action".[108] In 1988, NGOs established their own co-ordinating body independently of the government, the Voluntary Action Network India (VANI), which took some sting out of state-NGO conflict. In a country where interest groups have traditionally found it difficult to remain autonomous from political parties as well as the state, VANI may prove an important landmark in consolidating the institutional integrity of India's voluntary sector, yet the highly segmented nature of Indian society and politics will remain a significant obstacle to unity.

Indonesia represents a different problem to India, a genuinely dominant state not threatened by elite agrarian interests, but rather a complex and heterogeneous country where the state places a premium on stability and unity, posing a different dilemma for NGOs. Migdal argues that strong states are rare;[109] creating them requires a wrenching social dislocation leading to a tremendous concentration of social control, which in turn depends on exogenous factors creating catastrophic conditions that undermine existing survival strategies, the bases of social control.[110] In Indonesia in 1965 a military coup wiped out the communist party, *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (PKI), in a slaughter which claimed the lives of up to half a million people. The coup was backed by an American government preoccupied with war

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[108] Rajesh Tandon, "The State and Voluntary Agencies in India", in Holloway (Ed)., **Doing Development...**, pp. 27-28.

[109] Migdal, **Strong Societies, Weak States...**, pg. 269.

[110] Ibid, pg. 262.

in Vietnam, and fear of the spread of communism throughout South-East Asia. The subsequent state of terror and rural "pacification" to which it led facilitated the imposition of the *Orde Baru* (New Order) regime of General Suharto.

The Indonesian state exerts significant control over rural organisations that link the poor directly to the state apparatus and has been able to maintain effective social control. By inheriting the *badan perjuangan*, the local associations that represented the main institutional constituency in the nationalist pre-independence *pemuda* movement, the Sukarno regime created *GOLKAR* (from *golongan karya*, or "functional groups"), the ruling party under the Suharto regime, with a presence in practically every village. Through its control of government patronage and its administration by officials of the bureaucracy down to the village level, supplemented by legislation banning political parties from organising in rural areas between election campaigns, *GOLKAR* has won every national election since 1971.

After 1981 however, fluctuating balance of payments difficulties caused by oil revenue shortfalls[111] led to reductions in spending on state development programmes. The government tried to compensate by liberalizing the economy and promoting greater community participation.[112] As a result, it acknowledged the role of NGOs in maintaining welfare programmes in rural areas and allowed them greater autonomy to raise funds abroad and from coordinating with government agencies. In Indonesia, communism and socialism are regarded by the government as alien ideologies potentially capable of undermining the entire fabric of the Indonesian state however, and NGOs are are seen as sympathetic to both

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[111] Traditionally Indonesia's major export earner, oil revenues accounted for 80% of export earnings in 1981.

[112] Mary Johnson, "Non-Government Organisations at the Crossroads in Indonesia", in Robert C. Rice (Ed.), **Indonesian Economic Development: Approaches, Technology, Small-Scale Textiles, Urban Infrastructure and NGOs**, Proceedings of the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies' Winter Lecture Series 1988, Monash University, Clayton, 1990, pp. 77-78.

ideologies. As a result, the government does not allow NGOs to engage in political activity and the Indonesian NGO community is largely apolitical, concentrating on social development functions. As a result, Indonesia has some of the most effective and focused rural development agencies in South-East Asia.

In 1983, reflecting NGO sensitivities, the term "NGO" was largely abandoned because of its anti-government and oppositional connotation, in favour of the generic labels *Lembaga Swadaya Masayarakat* (LSM, Self-Help Organisation) and *Lembaga Pengembangan Swadaya Masayarakat* (Self-Help Promotion Organisation) and NGOs are loyal to the state ideology of *Pancasila.*[113] Many NGOs are however opposed to state attempts to monopolise interpretations of *Pancasila,*[114] and while not seeking Western-style democracy, are nevertheless attempting to expand the limited "political space" available to them to challenge the hegemony of the state.[115]

As a result, Indonesian NGOs lack the independence needed to forge a strategic

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[113] Philip Eldridge, "NGOs and the State in Indonesia", in Arief Budiman, (Ed.), **State and Civil Society in Indonesia**, Monash Papers on Southeast Asia No. 22, Monash University, 1990, pg. 506; Philip Eldridge, "NGOs in Indonesia: Popular Movement or Arm of Government", Working Paper No.55, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, Clayton, 1989, pp. 3-4. *Pancasila* stresses belief in a supreme being, humanitarianism, national unity, democracy by consensus, and social justice.

[114] Eldridge, 1990, ibid, pg. 509 or 1989, ibid, pg. 5.

[115] Islam plays a key role in this respect. By exploiting the traditional Indonesian concept of *ummat* (community), religious leaders have forced the government to allow the establishment of relatively autonomous Islamic associations (See John Bresnan, **Managing Indonesia: The Modern Political Economy**, Columbia University Press, New York, 1993, pp. 236-239; Taufik Abdullah, "*Zakat* Collection and Distribution in Indonesia", in Mohamed Ariff (Ed.), **The Islamic Voluntary Sector in Southeast Asia**, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1991). A similiar situation exists in Vietnam where indigenous NGOs were legally sanctioned in 1991. Careful to echo the party line as obliged by law, NGOs are never-the-less increasing their autonomy from the state-controlled mass organisations to which they are loosely affiliated, emboldened by the state policy of *Doi Moi* (Renovation) (See Tran Thi Lanh, "The Role of Vietnamese NGOs in the Current Period", paper presented at the Vietnam Update Conference, "Doi Moi, the State and Civil Society", Australian National University, Canberra, 10-11 November 1994).

alliance with government agencies to undermine the power of agrarian elites,[116] and instead are primarily concerned with defending and expanding their limited autonomy from the government, especially the security agencies, *GOLKAR* officials and local administrators. Holloway describes the background to NGO strategy:

> The government has been particularly worried about groups of village-level organisations whose development activities might mask political agitation. This concern came to a head in 1972 when the various political parties were reduced to three...In the following year, a large number of fishermens', farmers', and workers' organisations were subsumed into... government-controlled [bodies]. Since then, there have been various attempts to replace NGO networks with those of their own, although this has been voluntary rather than by decree.[117]

As Eldridge notes however, these government-initiated structures including the "Village Community Resilience Institutes" (LKMD) were empty structures with little appeal to local communities.[118] In the 1980s, cracks in the cohesion of the Indonesian regime became apparent and NGOs were among the first to exploit them. Ministries such as Environment, Public Works, Interior, and the Cabinet Secretariat came to view NGOs in positive terms.[119] In 1982, the government issued an Environmental Law explicitly recognising the contribution of NGOs to environmental policy,[120] while in 1986 the Ministry of the Interior created, with NGO support, the "Working Committee on the Development of People's Participation in Regional Development".[121] However, the influence of the state security

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[116] Although land disputes remain an integral part of rural politics in Indonesia. Invariably the resentment of farmers and NGOs who work with them is directed at the state apparatus, eg. the Kedung Ombo dam project in which the government planned to displace 30,000 people in Central Java.

[117] Richard Holloway, "Partners in Development?: The Government and NGOs in Indonesia", in Holloway (Ed.), **Doing Development...**, pg. 148.

[118] Eldridge, "NGOs and the State in Indonesia", pg. 517.

[119] Andrew MacIntyre, **Business and Politics in Indonesia**, Asian Studies Association of Australia (ASAA) and Allen & Unwin, 1990, pg. 39.

[120] "Cooperation with NGOs...", Asian Development Bank, Vol. 1, pg. 119.

[121] Ibid, pg. 127.

apparatus was brought to bear in the passage of the 1985 Laws on Social Organisations (*Undang Undang Organisasi Kemasyakatatan*), which makes a state permit obligatory to establish an NGO and makes it more difficult for NGOs to attract foreign funding. The law came into effect in June 1987 but has not been applied systematically, illustrating an ambivalence in the Indonesian government's position.[122]

In such circumstances, NGOs invariably attempt to broaden the cracks in the governments position and in most countries, human rights NGOs are the most militant and the best placed to broaden the political space available to NGOs. In Indonesia, the Legal Aid Institute, one of the country's most active and controversial NGOs, has clashed openly with the government by representing defendants in politically sensitive trials,[123] while others have supported the opposition *Petisi Kelompok 50* (Group of 50 Petition). NGOs have also provided an important institutional base to students and intellectuals, traditionally the main opposition to the government. Most NGOs however expand their autonomy by collaborating with government, demonstrating their efficacy as development agencies and then attracting foreign funding,[124] enabling them to maintain a professional distance from government through mechanisms such as sub-contracting or tripartite collaboration (with government and foreign funders).

Given the top-down nature of Indonesian development strategy, and the authoritarian character of the regime, it is difficult for bottom-up initiatives to organise or threaten the

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[122] MacIntyre, **Business Associations...**, pg. 39. One illustration of this ambivalence is the Indonesian government's continued reluctance to introduce tax concessions for private institutions including NGOs (See Bresnan, **Managing Indonesia...**, pg. 301).

[123] MacIntyre, ibid; Daniel Lev, "Legal Aid in Indonesia", Working Paper No. 44, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, Clayton, 1987.

[124] Funding from international NGOs alone between 1977 and 1983 was worth US$25.5m. See "Cooperation with NGOs...", Asian Development Bank, pg. 124.

government.[125] The bottom-up organising strategies of large NGOs however, create a potential for autonomous mobilization. Indonesia's largest NGO, for instance, *Yayasan Bina Swadaya* (Community Self-Reliance Development Agency), had by the late 1980s organised 17,000 local groups directly or indirectly,[126] and about 15 large NGOs, mainly Jakarta-based, engage in similar work. With the advent of large-scale multi-lateral funding from the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and UN agencies, Indonesian NGOs may find greater scope to engage in independent organising and policy advocacy in years to come, potentially eroding the hegemony of the Indonesian state.

NGOs in the developing world remain wary of co-optation by foreign funders as well as by the state and often attempt to steer a difficult path between the two. In Thailand for instance, according to Gohlert, NGOs prefer foreign NGO rather than government funding, and prefer European over American or Japanese funding.[127] Frequently an important factor is the antagonism which foreign support for NGOs attracts from other actors. International development NGOs are often seen as vested interests wielding power without accountability. Arnold, for instance, describes them as "an insidious fifth column", "...with no intention of relinquishing their interests in the South".[128] "Progressive" NGOs in the developing world in particular risk opposition from Communist parties on two fronts: first because NGOs threaten party legitimacy as defenders of the interests of the poor; and second, because they become embroiled in factional party splits. In India for instance, the Communist Party split

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[125] Although the New Order regime has had to contend with insurgency in Northern Sumatra and Irian Jaya, an independence movement in East Timor and frequent clashes with student groups.

[126] "Cooperation with NGOs...", Asian Development Bank, pg. 131.

[127] Ernst W. Gohlert, **Power and Culture in Thailand: The Politics of Development**, White Lotus Co., Bangkok, 1990, pg. 40.

[128] Guy Arnold, **The End of the Third World**, St. Martins Press/Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1993, pp. 176-177.

in 1969. A break-away revisionist faction committed itself to parliamentary struggle and by the early 1990s had strong pockets of support in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, eastern Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and West Bengal, areas where NGOs and POs were prominent in local politics. A more radical faction however, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)) regarded all foreign-funded NGOs as agents of imperialism that weakened the workers' and peasants' movement, and called on the Indian government to further regulate such NGOs.[129]

Like indigenous hardline communist parties, Asian governments are wary of the divisive impact of foreign funding to indigenous NGOs. In Malaysia, the ethnic Malay-dominated government feared the effect of a politically-vocal NGO community on stability, and the country's delicate ethnic compact during the late 1980s and early 1990s. In particular, the government feared that foreign funding would encourage oppositional and politically-assertive NGOs. The Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad criticized foreign manipulators using a worldwide network of NGOs to promote popular causes in third world countries, and described foreign-assisted NGOs such as the Environmental Protection Society Malaysia (EPSM) or *Aliran Kesedaran Negara* (Aliran) as "thorns" in the government's "flesh". This euphemism was subsequently appropriated by Malaysian NGOs themselves.[130] Environmental NGOs, for instance, by linking with foreign counterparts provided, significant opposition to the construction of hydro-electric dams, embarrassing the government internationally.[131] Many opposition activists, prosecuted under Malaysia's 1960 Internal

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[129] Brosch, "The Discourse on Non-Governmental Organisations...in India", pg. 27.

[130] See Gurmit Singh K.S., **A Thorn in the Flesh**, Selangor, 1990.

[131] See Michael Vatikiotis, "Malaysia's War: Government Hits Back at its Critics", **Far Eastern Economic Review**, 4 June 1992. For a detailed study of Malaysian environmental NGOs, see Bernard Eccleston and David Potter, "NGOs and the Environmental Politics of Deforestation in Asia", paper presented to the annual conference of the Association of South-East Asian Studies in the United Kingdom (ASEASUK), London, 28-30 March 1994. The authors note that in September 1992, Dr. Mahatir sought a truce with environmental NGOs, declaring that they were no longer seen as the enemy.

Security Act and related legislation, especially in the 1987 wave of arrests, came from foreign-assisted NGOs, and faced charges such as attending demonstrations or NGO training courses in the Philippines.[132] The 1987 arrests stimulated the politicization of the NGO community by bringing NGO activists together in prison and by eroding fear of the Internal Security Act and led to the formation of SUARAM, Malaysia's main human rights NGO.

The logic behind government behaviour was obvious; support for the dominant party in the ruling coalition, UMNO *Baru* (the New United Malay Nationalist Organisation), came mainly from rural Malays and the party maintained a tight grip over local associational life. In increasing their limited ability to reach the rural poor, rural development or environmental NGOs represented one of the few potential threats to UMNO *Baru's* power base.[133] In addition to legislation which inhibits NGOs extending beyond their Kuala Lumpur and middle-class base, the government has also been able to exploit personality and organisational tensions within the NGO community to undermine its political impact. NGO leaders however hope that sections of the growing middle-class will become alienated from the existing political parties and will opt instead for political participation expressed through NGO action.[134]

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[132] The Malaysian government's White Paper No. 14 of 1988, "Towards Preserving National Security", for instance, contains, in Appendix F, a photograph of two named Malaysian NGO activists labeled "photographs showing involvement of Marxist individuals from Malaysia in demonstration [sic] in the Philippines".

[133] On the lack of rural development NGOs in Malaysia,and the predominantly middle-class character of the NGO community, see Andrew Harding, "Public Interest Groups, Public Interest Law and Development in Malaysia", Paper presented to the conference on "Law and Development for the 1990s: Towards new Dimensions of Accountability", School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 30 May-1 June 1990. In contrast to other countries where rural development NGOs represent a large section of the NGO community as a whole, Harding argues that Malaysian NGOs cover 7 main sectors as follows: consumer rights; environment; religious rights; social reform; women; culture and education; and human rights.

[134] See for instance, Chandra Muzaffar, **Freedom in Fetters: An Analysis of the state of democracy in Malaysia**, Aliran Kesedaran Negara, Penang, 1988 edition, pp. 66-67.

Dr. Mahathir's criticisms also raise the question of whether foreign funding, motivated by a desire to expand and strengthen civil society, leads to the establishment of NGOs that are unable to develop effective links with other groups or institutions to ensure their viability and relevance. In Cambodia, NGOs outperformed the Vietnamese-sponsored regime of Hun Sen at rural relief and rehabilitation, and absorbed over US$10m per annum from foreign NGOs, an inflow which the government bureaucracy would have been unable to absorb, resulting in effective state-NGO partnerships.[135] But during the reign of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) established in March 1992 to oversee the May 1993 elections, the number of NGOs proliferated, stimulated in part by UNTAC's US$2bn. budget. Many collapsed however following the departure of UNTAC while many of those that survived, including the human rights organisations, are resented by the Sihanouk regime as foreign creations with little support among the Cambodian people.

The NGO literature fails to explain the full complexity of NGO attempts to maintain autonomy from the hegemonic campaigns of other institutions. While the threat of co-optation by the state, and to a much lesser extent, the threat of over reliance on foreign funding are covered,[136] others are largely ignored. One important threat, for instance, comes from political parties who are wary of NGO attempts to agitate their geographical or sectoral constituencies or undermine the patronage basis of their appeal. Another problem largely ignored is that of working in territory controlled by insurgent groups. Similarly, the threat to left-wing NGOs posed by the centralizing tendencies of Marxist-Leninist movements is also ignored, a complex problem for such NGOs since they must also avoid co-optation by the

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[135] Clark D. Neher, **Southeast Asia in the New International Era**, Westview Press, Boulder CO, 1991, pg. 188; Clark, **Democratizing Development...**, pg. 5.

[136] See for instance Bishwapriya Sanyal, **Cooperative Autonomy: The dialectic of State-NGOs relationship in developing countries** [sic], Research Series 100, International Labour Organisation, Geneva, 1994, which provides a comprehensive literature review.

state and foreign funders.

7. The Politics of Opposition and Protest

Throughout the developing world, NGOs and POs have become important institutional vehicles for mobilizing and articulating opposition to the state. Firstly, they fill an institutional vacuum by articulating issue-based platforms in countries where political parties are based on patronage and by mobilizing groups and individuals which the party system has proved unable to reach. Second, they have filled an institutional vacuum at a time when the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union has undermined the popular legitimacy of radical social movements. Third, amid a profound differentiation of social structure in many developing countries, NGOs play important roles in complex and differentiated social movements. Overall however, while the NGO literature grapples in some detail with the potential and problems of NGO alliances with the state, it largely ignores important patterns of opposition and protest. The literature on social movements, however, concerned largely with Latin America, and hitherto distinct from the mainstream NGO literature, addresses some of these issues. Since NGOs engage in protest action largely through participation in broad social movements, the literature provides valuable insights, and needs to be wedded to the NGO literature for a proper appreciation of the dynamics of NGO protest. The broad historical context which characterises the social movements literature can also help develop a greater historical understanding of the causes of NGO proliferation and role expansion and bring a structural perspective to the subject which balances the concern with formal political processes characterising the NGO literature.

An important problem with social movements theory as applied to the developing

world[137] is its failure to adequately analyze the changing institutional character of such movements and more specifically to recognise the increasingly important role of NGOs. For instance, in a review of the predominant literature on popular protest and contemporary social movements in Latin America, Susan Eckstein analyses forms of protest, the social basis of defiance and the impact of defiance, but not the institutional vehicles used to articulate it.[138] The failure leads to a number of problems. Eckstein argues, for instance, that "People learn repertoires of defiance partly in reaction to dominant group responses".[139] Repertoires of defiance however also depend on the institutional vehicles employed by dominant and dominated groups alike. She also argues that "...the repertoire of collective action on which groups tend to draw tends to be limited and heavily influenced by social structural features and historic traditions",[140] again missing the relationship between institutionalization and mobilization,[141] important given that NGOs differ in their strategic objectives and resultant tactics.

David Lehmann is one of the few writers to attempt to reconcile the relatively new phenomenon of NGOs with the changing character of contemporary social movements.

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[137] See for instance Susan Eckstein (Ed.), **Power and Popular Protest: Latin American Social Movements**, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1989; Marta Fuentes and Andre Gunder-Frank, "Ten Theses on Social Movements", **World Development**, Vol. 17 No. 2, 1989; Samir Amin, Giovanni Arrighi, Andre Gunder-Frank and Immanuel Wallerstein (Eds.), **Transforming the Revolution: Social Movements and the World System**, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1990; James Petras and Morris Morley, **US Hegemony Under Siege: Class, Politics and Development in Latin America**, Verso, London, 1991. For a comprehensive review of Latin American social movements theory, see Joe Foweraker, **Theorizing Social Movements**, Pluto Press, London, 1995. On new social movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America, see Ponna Wignaraja (Ed.), **New Social Movements in the South: Empowering the People**, Zed Books, London, 1993.

[138] Susan Eckstein, "Power and Popular Protest in Latin America", in Eckstein (Ed.), **Power and Popular Protest....**

[139] Ibid, pg. 10.

[140] Ibid, pg. 9.

[141] A relationship recognised as central in political science theory. See, for instance, Huntington, **Political Order In Changing Societies**, Chapter 1.

Lehmann suggests a general relationship between economic change and the proliferation of NGOs, arguing that Latin America's previously large-scale social movements are fragmenting into smaller ones amid a shift in the themes of social mobilization.[142] In the 1960s, he argues, social movements were composed primarily of "large organisations calling upon a nationwide constituency and aiming to influence government policy or engage in broad-based conflict drawn up along the lines of social class" but that authoritarianism undermined them.[143] In Chile, Lehmann notes, large peasant organisations were easily repressed and dismantled by the Pinochet dictatorship. In Peru, the land reform programme of the late 1960s, which broke up the large estates into co-operatives, resulted in the cooptation of peasant organisations. In Brazil, the Confederation of Agricultural Workers (CONTAG) had a membership of 4.5m in 1978 but was only able to bargain effectively in the sugar cane industry "where a degree of uniformity in managerial and pricing arrangements makes the negotiation of collective agreements feasible".[144] As a result, in the late 1970s and 1980s new forms of social mobilization developed partly in response to repression but also as a response to changes in economic structure and the role of the state in the economy. Today, Lehmann suggests, "In the place of large formal organisations, we find a myriad of small-scale dispersed movements engaged in an enormous variety of conflicts".[145] Contemporary rural social conflict, Lehmann notes, "...takes multiple, decentralized, and localised forms and rarely follows a hegemonic political organisation".[146] And in turn, the social base of these movements is heterogeneous, including smallholders, sharecroppers, artisans, and landless workers.

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[142] Lehmann, **Democracy and Development....**, pp. 148-160.
[143] Ibid, pg. 148.
[144] Ibid pg. 157.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid, pg. 160.

Within these diffuse movements, NGOs play an important role as intermediaries, and Lehmann underlines the role played by the Catholic church and by foreign funders in promoting NGOs as vehicles for popular protest.[147] Lehmann also notes many of the pitfalls facing NGO protest and opposition. In the first place, he notes, NGOs and the diffuse social movements with which they work, risk "institutionalised marginality". Another problem he suggests is that when they acquire a national political profile, their leadership passes into the hands of political parties. Thirdly, NGOs have to contend with political clientelism in Brazil and party divisions bordering on sectarianism in Chile.[148]

Friedmann offers another of the more detailed studies of the basis of NGO protest, through analysis of the political claims pressed by NGOs and the social movements of which they form a part. He identifies four main claims: 1. inclusive democracy, 2. appropriate economic growth, 3. gender equality, and 4. sustainability.[149] The value of this analysis is its fairly accurate reflection of the contemporary appeals made by NGOs and social movements in their protest actions against the state. While some may quibble with finer points (many NGOs for instance would eschew the informal labour advocated by Friedmann), he successfully pinpoints four key areas of conflict, even if the practical mechanisms by which that conflict materialises are not addressed.

In Brazil, NGOs play an important oppositional role, especially since the transition from authoritarian rule in 1986. One of the most remarkable features of Brazilian politics since 1986 has been the rise of the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (PT, Workers' Party). In the Presidential elections of 1990, the PT leader Luis Inacio Lula da Silva won 31m votes against 35m for the winner, Fernando Collor de Mello, an unprecedented parliamentary achievement

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[147] Ibid, pg. 159, for instance.

[148] Ibid pp. 181-182.

[149] Friedmann, **Empowerment...**, Chapters 5 & 6.

for a progressive party in Brazilian politics.[150] Although the PT is strongest in the industrial heartlands of Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, it attracted crucial rural support mobilized by NGOs and POs, eg. CONTAG, an alliance of 3000 POs or unions with a combined membership today of 10m united around a pro-land reform platform, or MST, (the Movement of Rural Workers Without Land).[151] In a country with an estimated 100,000 Base Christian Communities,[152] most of which espouse progressive politics, church-based NGOs and POs also played an important role. Significantly, in the northeast, where rural inequality is highest and where NGOs and POs are strong, Lula won almost half the vote.[153] The experience of NGO support for the PT questions Lehmann's analysis on two particular points; firstly, that NGOs and POs necessarily risk institutionalized marginalization and secondly, that Brazilian NGOs are necessarily undermined by political clientelism.

Loveman describes progressive NGOs in Chile as "The Invisible Left", playing an important role in restructuring opposition to the state. Emerging first in the mid 1970s under the umbrella of the Catholic Church and the *Vicaria de la Solidaridad* (Vicarate of Solidarity, one of Chile's leading NGOs) NGOs,

> novel in politics, contributed to the professionalization, technification and sophistication of opposition political elites at a time when political parties, the labor movement, student and community organisations were suppressed by the dictatorship. Staffed primarily by leftist (or, less frequently, Christian Democratic) academics, former government officials and professionals, they also allowed a reconsideration of the role of the state in Chile by intellectuals of the left and centre. The increasing emphasis on grassroots, local autonomous initiatives in the development process was a dramatic departure from the tradition of state-centred vision of the Chilean

[150] See Emir Sader and Ken Silverstein, **Without Fear of Being Happy: Lula, the Workers Party and Brazil**, Verso, London, 1991, pg. 142.

[151] Ibid, pg. 60.

[152] Ibid, pg. 58.

[153] Ibid, pg. 142.

left.[154]

Progressive NGOs, Loveman argues, articulated a new political agenda on the left that included "a new emphasis on human rights, the basic needs of the poor, the role of women in society and politics, and...environmental destruction"[155].

In South and South-East Asia, NGOs are also playing important roles in mobilizing opposition to the state. In Thailand for instance, NGOs, especially those concerned with human rights, played an important role in the demonstrations of May 1992 which led to the collapse of the National Peace-Keeping Council led by General Suchinda Kraprayoon, in contrast to the *Wan Maha Wipayok*, the "Great Tragedy" of October 1973, when demonstrations against military rule were led by students. Gohlert, for instance, argues that "...there is no sector in Thai society...more closely identified with and committed to political democracy and economic development for all than the private voluntary organisations",[156] although the underlying significance of that commitment has yet to be established. Ostensibly the May 1992 demonstrations unleashed the anger of an uninstitutionalized middle-class, but Gohlert argues that the institutional character of the mobilization was disguised by individuals hiding their organisational affiliations to protect NGOs from an expected military backlash.[157] Underlining the change in character of protest in Thailand between 1973 and 1992, Gohlert notes that during the turbulent period of democratic politics between 1973 and 1976, NGOs were largely distrusted by the student leadership. The 1973-1976 period

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[154] Brian Loveman, "The Political Left in Chile 1973-1990", in Barry Carr and Steve Ellner (Eds.), **The Latin American Left: From the Fall of Allende to Perostroika**, Westview Press, Boulder and Latin America Bureau, London, 1993, pg. 32.

[155] Ibid.

[156] Ernst W. Gohlert, "Thai Democracy and the May 1992 Crisis: The Role of Private Non-Profit Organisations", Paper presented to the Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies, University of Arizona, Tucson, 23-24 October 1992, pg. 2.

[157] Ibid, pg. 5. Justified in light of estimates that over 150 protestors died during the demonstrations.

however defined the NGO movement. Liberalization led to a growth in the number of NGOs while the repression of 1976 drove NGO leaders underground with other opposition and student figures, establishing a newly-political and left-wing orientation.[158] In contrast to Malaysia, Thai environmental NGOs have successfully opposed government attempts to tap the country's hydroelectric power potential and achieved, the cancellation of a hydroelectric scheme at Pak Moon in 1991.[159]

In general, the literature covers the dynamics of NGO protest and opposition to the state in scant detail. While there is some suggestion that human rights and environmental NGOs are significant initiators of protest actions against the state, there is little analysis of the qualitative impact of different types of NGOs and POs. Similarly, there is little analysis of tactics, the calculations behind them, and their variation over time or with regime change, eg. participation in elections or support for political parties, advocacy of armed struggle, militant strikes and demonstrations, public campaigns for legislative change, establishing personal links with government figures. Neither is there comparative analysis that enables an assessment of the efficacy of NGO/PO protest, vis-a-vis political parties or armed insurgencies.

8. Politics and NGO Organisation

Ultimately, the ability of NGOs to intervene in local or national political debates depends on how they fulfil their core service-delivery functions and how they organise themselves individually and collectively as a political force. The NGO literature discusses five particular issues: size; focus; funding & finance; inter-NGO/PO relations; and participation

[158] Gohlert, **Power and Culture...**, pp. 101-102.

[159] See Paul Handley and Susumu Awanohara, "Power Struggle: Thai Dam Scheme...", **Far Eastern Economic Review**, 17 October 1991,

& decision-making processes.

Size represents an issue of controversy within the NGO literature with a general consensus that large intermediate NGOs are more effective than smaller, more numerous ones and a minority view that favours the latter. The controversy is important because the NGO/PO communities in many developing countries (eg. Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka) consists of a small number of large, long-established and well-funded NGOs set against hundreds or thousands of small NGOs and POs. This disparity is largely due to the preferences of foreign funders who have created a virtual oligopoly but it also represents an intermediate stage in a complex process of institutionalization. Carroll's empirical study of Latin American GSOs (intermediary NGOs) and MSOs (POs), for instance, found that GSOs had a slight edge over MSOs in group capacity building and poverty reach but a big advantage when it came to policy influence and innovation and suggested that foreign funding was best directed to GSOs,[160] a view supported by Lehmann.[161] Given the current concern with "scaling-up",[162] and the belief that "maximising impact is the paramount objective of NGOs",[163] the literature deals at length with the disadvantages of smallness. To Farrington and Bebbington who summarise this view, "small-scale" usually means "insignificant" in the face of pervasive poverty; "politically independent" can mean "powerless" or "disconnected"; "low-cost" can mean "under-financed" or "poor-quality"; while "innovative" can simply mean "temporary" or "unsustainable".[164]

One of the main critics of this view, Constantino-David, however, notes that

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[160] Carroll, **Intermediary NGOs...**, pg. 36.

[161] Lehmann, **Democracy and Development...**, pg. 201.

[162] See for instance Edwards and Hulme, "Scaling Up The Development Impact of NGOs: concepts and experiences" in Edwards and Hulme (Eds), **Making a Difference....**

[163] John Clark, "Policy influence, lobbying and advocacy" in ibid, pg. 191.

[164] Farrington and Bebbington, **Reluctant Partners...**, pg. 23.

"beyond a certain size, it becomes impossible to avoid setting up a bureaucratic/hierarchial structure that is less flexible, creative and participatory than smaller organisations".[165] Furthermore, she argues, the underlying ethos of development NGO work should remain participatory, "including the ability to decentralise decision-making to autonomous regional groups", whereas BINGOs "retard the development of autonomous development NGOs because programmes are developed at the centre", and because they are favoured disproportionately by donors[166]. Constantino-David's view is credible; while all large NGOs struggle to avoid being atrophied by bureaucracy, many are retreating from direct programme work to become funding agencies in their own right. As a result, foreign funders are increasingly bypassing intermediary NGOs to fund regional and local NGOs/POs.

Focus represents another area of controversy. On the one hand, a consensus exists within the literature that "scaling-up" NGO impact necessitates a macro-view of NGO action. On the other hand however, an organisational and managerial thrust to the literature continues to emphasise the importance of professionalising service-delivery functions. Farrington and Bebbington illustrate an ambiguity in the literature: while arguing that a critical weakness of NGO action is that it is often conducted in isolation from wider policy issues, they also argue that NGOs pay too much attention "to qualitative aspects of development such as participation and not enough to the harder questions of income generation".[167] Edwards and Hulme agree, arguing that "with greater access to resources comes a preoccupation with growth, a tendency towards bureaucratization and an increasing danger of becoming 'contractors for the

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[165] Karina Constantino-David, "The Philippine Experience in Scaling Up", in Edwards and Hulme (Eds.), **Making a Difference...**, pg. 139.

[166] Ibid.

[167] Farrington and Bebbington, **Reluctant Partners...**, pg. 184.

international system and its agenda'"[168]. Certainly, political conditions also influence focus to a large extent. The relatively "liberal" environment NGOs face in India or Chile encourages programme diversity while the restrictive environment faced by NGOs in Indonesia enhances programme focus. Equally however, donor restrictions on political activity and concern with empirically-verifiable results has inhibited indigenous NGO communities from striking a balance between macro- and micro-concerns on the basis of local political conditions.

Ostensibly, finance and specifically the reliance of most NGOs in the developing world on funding from abroad, has given rise to little controversy, especially in the core texts on NGO action. This is largely due however to the donor-driven agenda which underpins these books but it obscures a fundamental imbalance which inevitably gives rise to disquiet. Lehmann is one of the few authors to acknowledge the problem directly. His concern with the "institutionalised marginality" towards which NGOs and social movements may be moving is traced directly to NGOs and POs funded from Europe and America, which, he argues,

> fit the ideological and even the budgetary requirements of these agencies very well: they are cheap, they are prepared to put up with short-term programmes requiring annual or biennial reapplications and they embody the philosophy of an 'alternative development'. They do not use high technology, they seek out self-sufficiency and their members are perceived as constituting...the authentic poor, the salt of the earth.[169]

A number of specific tensions arise however which are not addressed in the literature: First, large NGOs and POs are increasingly concerned about the short-term nature of funding commitments, the recurring bureaucratic requirements associated with maintaining it, and the

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[168] Edwards and Hulme, "Making a Difference?: Concluding Comments", in Edwards and Hulme (Eds.), **Making a Difference...**, pg. 215.

[169] Lehmann, **Democracy and Development...**, pp. 180-181. See also pg. 189.

leverage over programme direction which it gives to the funders concerned, and are seeking new arrangements concerning in-country project approval, longer term funding and a more mutually supportive relationship. Second, smaller NGOs and POs in particular are becoming increasingly resentful of the ability of big NGOs to corner the lions share of foreign funding and are now forging direct links with donors to erode the oligopoly. Third, NGOs and POs of all hues and sizes, partly under pressure from donors but also through a process of institutionalization, are attempting to generate an increased proportion of their monetary and non-monetary (eg. equipment or services) resources from indigenous sources. All three of these processes give rise to interesting political dynamics which go unexplored in the NGO literature.

The issue of inter-NGO relations is one which gives rise to near-unanimity within the NGO literature: all writers note that 'peak' NGO/PO bodies and multi-tiered federations have been established in nearly all developing countries with NGO/PO communities and that they constitute an important component of "scaling-up" strategies designed to increase the impact of NGO action. As Uphoff argues,

> while isolated instances of local institutional development can be impressive, their cumulative effect is negligible...what counts are systems of networks of organisations, both vertically and horizontally.[170]

A significant, if empirically weak, case can also be made that such national-level federations have had a demonstrable political impact in overthrowing dictatorial regimes in Bangladesh (Ershad), Chile (Pinochet), Haiti (Duvalier) and Thailand (Suchinda) and have become a potent force in the politics of capital cities throughout the developing world. But other interesting political aspects of inter-NGO relations are also apparent. First, peak bodies and federations often become vehicles for advancing the interests of large NGOs or personalities

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[170] Uphoff, **Local Institutional Development...**, pg. 213.

particularly in relatively sectarian political cultures such as Bangladesh or Chile. Second, federations of small NGOs or POs can be even more atrophied by bureaucracy than the large NGOs to which they are opposed, because of the need to achieve broad consensus before undertaking programme work. Third, peak-body or federation politics often suggests deep rivalry between an emphasis on sectoral-based organisation, usually characterized by control from the capital, and local- or regional-based organisation which aims to preserve autonomy from the centre and the regional distinctiveness of programme orientation. Fourth, NGO federations and peak bodies are often beset by debate about political tactics and levels of intervention in political arenas. None of these issues however is addressed in the NGO literature.

The final issue, participation and decision-making processes, is among the most complex and controversial since its strikes to the heart of the nature of NGO action. Carroll found that MSOs, which by definition should be more participatory, were no more effective at ensuring participation than GSOs,[171] and that they were "more prone to mismanagement, corruption, political cronyism or cooptation than GSOs whose leaders and staff do not depend on the type of reward system where formal accountability mechanisms can be circumvented more easily".[172] Government-organised structures at the local level often perpetuate a strong if empirically unsustainable rhetoric of popular participation and the literature has long acknowledged the comparative advantage organisations such as NGOs or POs enjoy over government in promoting political participation.[173] But concern at the rhetorical aspect of NGO/PO commitment to participation is now being voiced. Jonathan Rigg, for instance,

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[171] Carroll, **Intermediary NGOs...**, pg. 3

[172] Ibid, pp. 88-89.

[173] For instance, Esman and Uphoff, **Local Organisations...**, or Uphoff, **Local Institutional Development...**

critically appraises the community culture development perspective, *watthanatham chumchon*, practised by a number of Thai NGOs, and notes that far from resulting from popular participation of the intended beneficiaries, the approach is inherently elitist:

> Selective notions of village self-reliance, co-operation and participation have been coopted by academics (and then by the state) and placed within an entirely new, alien, framework. The ideology masquerades as village-based and -oriented, yet it is little different in the manner in which it has been designed from the orthodox development strategies it aims to replace.[174]

Hewison, in a reply, argues that Rigg's overall position demonstrates "a proclivity to reduce political activity to the level of individuals and their cliques, ignoring class- and system-level interaction".[175] Hewison's argument can also be interpreted more broadly since the NGO literature fails to adequately analyze the institutional or class, as distinct from the clientelistic, aspect of local-level NGO action. Yet Rigg is undeniably correct in suggesting a discrepancy between a rhetorical NGO commitment (often articulated in good faith) to participation and a practical capability to ensure it. The NGO literature is poorly placed to address the issue. Given its donor-driven agenda, the literature, inevitably perhaps, misses the role played by donors who traditionally encouraged NGO accountability to their own boards rather than to their own members and supporters.

9. Conclusion.

This chapter argues that the politics of NGO action is insuffiently analysed in academic literature. Rather, the mainstream NGO literature focuses on the socio-economic

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[174] Jonathan Rigg, "Grass-roots development in rural areas: A lost cause?", **World Development**, Vol. 19 No. 2/3, 1991, pg. 204.

[175] Kevin Hewison, "Nongovernmental Organisations and the Cultural Development Perspective in Thailand: A Comment on Rigg (1991)", **World Development**, Vol. 21 No. 10, 1993, pg. 1700.

roles of NGOs, especially in promoting rural development, at the expense of their political roles. Political scientists have been slow to appreciate the significance of the "associational revolution", the proliferation of NGOs in the developing world since the early 1970s. They have thus failed to contribute to the rapidly emerging social science literature on NGOs. A seperate body of literature, focusing on new or contemporary social movements, examines issues that relate to NGO political roles. This literature however has yet to make an impression on the mainstream NGO literature. Moreover, the normative concern with development that underpins the mainstream NGO literature obscures the political character of NGOs and their antecedents, civic and political associations, and pressure groups.

Nevertheless the NGO literature does address political issues to an extent. When supplemented with region or country-specific NGOs studies and themes from mainstream political science or political economy, a tentative picture emerges of NGOs playing significant roles in local and national politics. Important questions, however, go substantially unanswered. Why or how, for instance, do NGOs come into existence? How or why do NGOs intervene in politics? Are NGOs simply pressure groups, or distinct political actors? How are NGOs affected by prevailing political culture? Why do states forge relationships with NGOs? What obstacles undermine such relationships? How do NGOs relate to other political institutions such as political parties, trade unions, peasant associations or insurgent groups? This dissertation attempts to answer these questions with respective to the Philippines.

A major issue addressed throughout the study is the role of NGOs in promoting democracy. "Redemocrarization" and the politics of democratic consolidation have been among the most significant themes in political science theory since the mid-1980s. An important dimension of this concern involves accounting for new mechanisms created by

changing institutional relationships. Competing institutional interests animate any process of democratization and clues to the character of a "redemocratization" project can be found in an examination of the nature and degree of competition between and within institutions of state and society. Since it is not certain that NGOs are the most effective means to institutionalize "popular empowerment", this study examines the contradictions as much as the potential of NGO action.

CHAPTER TWO: NGOs and the Philippine State: From Spanish Rule To The Fall of Marcos.

1. Introduction.

Though the contemporary NGO literature ignores or obscures the long tradition of voluntary action throughout the developing world and its political character, many developing countries such as the Philippines have voluntary sectors dating to the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. In an important contribution to the NGO literature, David Korten identifies four "generations" of NGOs as follows:[1]

(1) First generation strategies: "Relief and welfare". Direct delivery of services to a beneficiary group or population such as food, health care and shelter.

(2) Second generation strategies: "Small-scale, Self-Reliant Local Development". Breaking the dependency resulting from charity or humanitarian assistance. Empowerment of local communities through "preventative health care measures, the introduction of improved agricultural practices, the formation of community councils, digging wells, building feeder roads etc".

(3) Third generation strategies: "Sustainable Systems Development". Concerted efforts to replicate and multiply NGO successes at the micro-level. Creation of new and sizeable institutions, increased collaboration with governmental agencies and a change in NGO role from service provider to catalyst, especially in mobilising local communities through autonomous Peoples Organisations (POs).

(4) Fourth generation strategies: Still evolving and relatively undefined but essentially the

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[1] David C. Korten, **Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda**, Kumarian Press, West Hartford, 1990, pp. 115-127.

promotion of institutional and structural reform through increasingly complex NGO/PO coalitions, both nationally and internationally.

Korten's typology, especially the first and second "generations", is based on a primarily socio-economic interpretation of NGO activity that reflects the focus of the broader literature. In practice however, as the case of the Philippines illustrates, NGOs and their antecedents, civic and political organisations, have a long record of participation in politics.

2. NGOs and State-NGO relationships in the Philippines from the 1880s to 1972.

"First generation" strategies in the Philippines date to the late nineteenth century and to collaboration between elite philanthropists, the Catholic Church and the Spanish colonial administration. One of the first Philippine civic organisations, the *Conferencia de San Vicente de Paul,* was established in 1886 by Spanish priests, with Margarita Roxas de Ayala, founder of the *Casa Ayala* and scion of the Zobel de Ayala family, its first President.[2] In the 1880s, the Spanish colonial administration established the General Inspection of Charities and Public Health to involve charities in upgrading medical skills and facilities, and to make up for the shortage of qualified personnel in the bureaucracy.[3] According to Rizal's *Noli me Tangere*, the administration gave awards to civic initiatives that promoted agricultural or commercial development, financed by taxes on cock fighting.[4] Spanish policy however restricted the right of association and political organisations were treated harshly.

Philanthropy was a prominent force in the establishment of civic organisations

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[2] **Women of Distinction**, Bukang Liwayway, Manila, 1967, pg. 26.

[3] Eliodro G. Robles, **The Philippines in the Nineteenth Century**, Malaya Books Inc., Manila, 1969, pg. 230.

[4] Jose Rizal, **Noli me Tangere**, translated by Leon Ma. Guerrero, Longman, London, 1961, pg. 289. "Blessed the vice that produced such excellent results!", Rizal adds wryly in response.

throughout the world in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. In the Philippines however, where family clans would long remain the primary unit of social organisation and a dominant force in politics, its role was accentuated. Philanthropy enabled prominent families to secure church approval of their wealth and to legitimate their social prestige; to secure and maintain political office and protect their economic interests; and to socially interact with the Spanish, and later, American, rulers. For the Catholic Church, the establishment of charitable organisations brought the support of prominent families in enforcing its own religious hegemony. Equally, the Spanish state relied on the Church and prominent philanthropists to help provide relief and maintain social order during emergencies and natural disasters, including the 1878 famine.

During the Philippine-American War 1898-1901, both sides used civic organisations as adjuncts to their armies. *Ilustrados* (and women in particular) formed philanthropic organisations, such as the Philippine Red Cross, to raise funds for the *Katipunan*, and provide medical care for its wounded soldiers.[5] American civic organisations, including the Salvation Army and the Young Mens Christian Association (YMCA) were mobilized to support the American war effort, especially to treat wounded soldiers.

With the imposition of American rule by 1901, charities began to multiply, stimulated by American colonial policy. William Howard Taft, the first American Governor General, and later, US President, believed that American-style De Tocquevillian democracy, centred on local government and vibrant civic organisations, could be transplanted to the Philippines.[6] A legal framework governing the activities of civic organisations was outlined

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[5] Teodoro M. Kalaw, **The Philippine Revolution**, Jorge B. Vargas Filipiniana Foundation, Manila, 1969, pg. 152.

[6] Stanley Karnow, **In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines**, Random House, New York, 1989, pg. 228

in the Philippine Corporation Law of 1906, and numerous American civic organisations had established offices in Manila by the late 1920s, including the Philippine Chapter of the American Red Cross, the Philippine Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Philippine Islands Anti-Tuberculosis League and the Associated Charities of Manila.[7]

American rule consolidated the role of philanthropy in legitimating the social status of Philippine elites. American philanthropic and missionary organisations established branches in the Philippines and members of the Filipino social elite embraced their activities with enthusiasm. Aluit's history of the Philippine Red Cross, for instance, notes that membership in the 1910s "was a veritible roster of all the great names of the Philippine scene at the time; Juan Sumulong, Jose de Luzurriaga, Cayetano S. Arellano, Jaime de Veyra, Sergio Osmena, Vicente Singson Encarnacion, Rafael Palma and Manuel L. Quezon all served on the board".[8] However, few philanthropic organisations challenged the administration on the socio-economic consequences of colonial rule.[9]

The American colonial government had two main means of encouraging the proliferation of civic organisations. Firstly, senior politicians, judges and administrators developed personal relationships with prominent American and Filipino philanthropists to provide elite patronage and leadership. Taft organised the *Gota de Leche*, a campaign to provide milk for orphan babies, with the civic organisation *La Proteccion de la Infancia*,

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[7] See **Rosenstock's Manila City Directory 1927-1928**, Volume XXXIII, pg. 182.

[8] Alfonson J. Aluit, **The Conscience of the Nation: A History of the Red Cross in the Philippines 1896-1972**, Philippine National Red Cross, Manila, 1972, pp. 182-183.

[9] See for instance Kenton J. Clymer, **Protestant Missionaries in the Philippines: An Inquiry into the American Colonial Mentality**, University of Illinois Press, Chicago, 1986, pg. 160, citing a YMCA official on the negative socio-economic consequences of colonial rule. The YMCA however refrained from openly challenging the colonial administration.

headed by prominent Filipino philanthropist, Teodoro Yangco.[10] Returning to the Philippines in 1905 as Secretary of War, Taft presided over the formal organisation of the Philippine Chapter of the American Red Cross.[11] A later Governor General, W. Cameron Forbes, generated financial support for the YMCA (described by Gleeck as "The most successful American effort deliberately aimed at modifying Filipino values") and served as one of the first Presidents of the Philippine Amateur Athletic Association.[12] The second method was to provide direct government funding. In 1921, the colonial government allotted $150,000, equivalent to 2.2% of its annual expenditure,[13] to civic organisations engaged in health service provision, especially for a campaign against leprosy.[14] Senior American officials were proud of the contribution civic organisations made to the provision of social services and the institutional innovation which they represented in a country where people traditionally relied on familial relationships to fulfil social needs.[15] Yet, the socio-economic impact of civic organisations was a palliative to overall colonial strategy of resource extraction.[16]

Civic organisations played an important political role in American colonial strategy. First, they aided the proliferation of democratic values and support for the American strategy of local government. In 1922, for instance, Governor General Leonard Wood reported that:

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[10] Lewis E. Gleeck Jr., **American Institutions in the Philippines 1898-1941**, Historical Conservation Society Monograph No. XXVIII, Manila, 1976, pg. 85.

[11] Ibid, pg. 89.

[12] Ibid, pp. 71 & 74-75.

[13] W. Cameron Forbes, **The Philippine Islands**, Volume II, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1928, pg. 244. The amount may be unrepresentative however, since allocations to charities were not made on a regular annual basis.

[14] Ibid, Volume I, pg. 278.

[15] See for instance, George A. Malcolm, **The Commonwealth of the Philippines**, D. Appleton-Century Company, New York, 1936, pg. 302. Malcolm was the Senior Justice of the Supreme Court.

[16] Total insular expenditure in 1921 for example was $6.8m, while revenue from taxation was $22.7m, and total revenue, $55m (Forbes, **The Philippine Islands**, Volume II pg. 244).

> One of the strongest influences for building up interest in proper municipal government comes from the numerous womens clubs. They have done excellent work, especially on behalf of child welfare, public health, public instruction, private and public morality and the stimulating of interest in local governments- municipal and provincial.[17]

Second, they helped persuade many Filipinos of the value of limited government and the role of independent and self-reliant initiatives at a time when the colonial administration was committed to resource extraction.[18] Third, Protestant civic organisations acted as a beachhead in establishing Protestant denominations in a country that was predominantly Catholic.[19] Officials of the YMCA led the first Protestant services on Philippine soil.[20] American pastors, Clymer notes, "considered the Y[MCA] as an evangelical organisation and maintained close ties with the mission".[21] The YMCA also played an important role in muting conflict with the Catholic Church and among the various Protestant denominations[22] while Protestant civic organisations supported the military pacification campaign and maintained close ties with military personnel.[23] Fourth, civic organisations facilitated the American strategy of maintaining political stability by perpetuating the position of the oligarchy, establishing the position of prominent families who remain prominent in NGO circles to this day, including the Benitezes and the Pardo de Taveras. Fifth, according to

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[17] **Annual Report of the Governor General of the Philippines**, 1922, pg. 31, quoted in ibid, Volume I, pp. 18-19.

[18] Writing in 1934, for instance, a Filipino political scientist noted in a college textbook, "The Filipinos, like many other peoples of the modern world believe that progress and advancement can not be attained by the work of government alone. These must be supplanted by the direct assistance of the people, either individually or through civic organisations". See Eufronio M. Alip, **Political and Cultural History of the Philippines**, Volume II, Alip & Sons Inc., Manila, 1934, pg. 409.

[19] Gleeck, **American Institutions...**, pg. 60.

[20] W. Cameroon Forbes, **The Philippine Islands**, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1928, Volume II, pg. 65.

[21] Clymer, **Protestant Missionaries...**, pg. 5.

[22] Ibid, pg. 103.

[23] Ibid, pg. 158.

Cullather, civic organisations and institutions sponsored by the colonial government helped to keep Manila's restive Chinese minority "compliant and happy" and promoted their "retro-assimilation" into Filipino culture.[24]

During the 1910s however, political cleavages developed between the colonial administration and civic organisations, compounded by racial tensions between Americans who used them to legitimate their political power and social prestige,[25] and Filipinos who used them to articulate their ambiguous and evolving sense of national identity. In 1905, the Philippine Chapter of the American Red Cross accepted that the colonial administration should assume responsibility for disaster relief and subsequently became inactive. But in the 1910s, when Filipinos had become more prominent, Americans and Filipinos differed over the role of the colonial administration in the organisation's affairs.[26] In 1916, the Red Cross's activities and its relations with the colonial administration became a major source of controversy when the Philippine legislature passed an act establishing a Philippine chapter independent of the American Red Cross. Directed against American dominance over most, and the exclusion of Filipinos from many, civic organisations, the act was declared void by the administration's Attorney General.[27] Tensions continued during the 1930s when the administration, now composed mainly of Filipino officials, and the Red Cross vied to claim credit for disaster relief activities, as President Quezon renewed demands for an independent Philippine Red Cross.[28]

Catholic civic organisations were equally engrossed in politics. During the 1930s, anti-

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[24] Nick Cullather, **Illusions of Influence: The Political Economy of United States-Philippine Relations, 1942-1960**, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1994, pg. 15.

[25] Filipinos were initially banned from membership of some American-established civic organisations, including the YMCA, where they only became members after 1910.

[26] Gleeck, **American Institutions...**, pp. 87 & 89.

[27] Ibid, pg. 88.

[28] Ibid, pg. 92.

communist and anti-socialist Catholic organisations such as the Catholic Womens League, the Bellermine Evidence League and the Chesterton Evidence League were established in reaction to the growth of trade unions and peasant associations.[29] Tracing church involvement in socio-economic transformation to this period, Fabros argues that counter-propaganda was the main objective of the Church's emerging concern with social action. This objective, he argues, was consolidated in the 1940s, as Catholic civic organisations began to organise peasants and workers. Following recognition of NGOs in the 1945 UN Charter, the Institute of Social Order, established in 1947, became one of the first church-inspired NGOs in the Philippines.

Overall, operating in the relatively rarefied atmosphere of elite Manila society, civic organisations were far removed from the mass movements that developed in response to American rule, and the increased political power of agrarian-based elites, and played a relatively minor role in the important political debates of the day. During the 1950s however, civic organisations became enmeshed in rural politics. Following World War II, the returning US military, with the aid of local landlords and the Philippine Constabulary, violently demobilized the peasant-based *Hukbong Bayan Laban Sa Hapon* (HBL, Anti-Japanese Peoples Army) because of its perceived communist orientation.[30] The reimposition of oligarchic rule, and in particular the prohibition on the peasant-backed Democratic Alliance occupying the 6 seats it won in 1946 legislative elections provoked remnants of the HBL, led by the *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas* (Philippine Communist Party) to form the *Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan* (HMB, The People's Liberation Army). Before the Huk Rebellion, Central Luzon had

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[29] Wilfredo Fabros, **The Church and its Social Involvement in the Philippines 1930-1972**, Ateneo de Manila University Press, Quezon City, 1988, pp. 17-20.

[30] See Benedict Kerkvliet, **The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines**, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1977, Chapter 4.

"virtually no horizontal political organisation."[31] At the height of the rebellion, 1949-1951, however, the HMB had roughly 15,000 armed guerillas, transforming Central Luzon through insurrection and the creation of large peasant unions.[32] At the same time, elite philanthropic organisations became increasingly active in rural areas. As agriculture became increasingly dominated by capitalist-based relations of production, and in the absence of government efforts to provide housing, education or other social services to workers, corporate philanthropy supplemented traditional patronage as companies provided support to their workforces and made donations to civic organisations which catered to their workers.

A counter-insurgency campaign directed by the US quashed the rural revolt by the mid-1950s. In 1952, the Quirino administration overhauled legislation governing non-profit voluntary organisations in the Science Act (Republic Act 2067), stimulating an immediate response through the establishment of new civic organisations commited to rural development and these organisations played an important role in winning the support of the rural population of Central Luzon for the government. One of the most important was the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM), established in 1952 in direct imitation of the Taiwanese Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction,[33] with help from the Social Welfare Administration (SWA). The SWA became a major funder of NGO activity during the 1950s. It's public assistance budget, P1.9m a year on average between 1953 and 1957, was supplemented by relief supplies from Catholic Relief Services of America, worth P4m in 1957 alone. This support enabled the SWA to approve grants totaling P200,000 in 1957,

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[31] Ibid, pp. 210 & 249.

[32] Ibid.

[33] James Putzel, **A Captive Land: The Politics of Agrarian Reform in the Philippines**, Catholic Institute for International Relations, London, 1992, pg. 90; Jose Abueva, **Ramon Magsaysay: A Political Biography**, Solidaridad Publishing House, Manila, 1971, pg. 362.

based on 226 applications from civic and charitable organisations.[34]

A retrospective account of military tactics used to crush the Huks observes that "civic organisations [made] contributions to the counter-guerrilla effort that [were] nothing short of awe-inspiring".[35] Confirming that view, a Huk commander's report explains declining support from peasants:

> Many have been influenced by deceitful government propaganda, the establishment of 'welfare agencies' (Agricultural Credit and Cooperative Financing Administration, Farmers Cooperative Associations, Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, Rural Improvement Club, Social Welfare Administration) and the promised land for the landless program administered by the Land Tenure Administration.[36]

Although few substantive concessions were made to the demands which had fuelled it, the Huk Rebellion prompted the government to forge direct institutional ties with the peasantry. In 1953, the Quirino administration, at US behest, established the Agricultural Credit and Co-operative Financing Administration (ACCFA) to organise Farmers Cooperative Marketing Associations (FACOMAS) and by 1959, 502 FACOMAS had been organised with a membership of 289,121 farmers.[37] This first attempt at state-led popular mobilization was a failure; by 1969, only 250 remained, and by 1975, less than 30.[38] Exploiting weaknesses in FACOMA strategy, elite agrarian interests dominated the new associations, undermining the intended direct links between state and peasants. As Po and Montiel explain:

> the FACOMAs were meant to serve the interests of farmers and agricultural

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[34] **Eight Annual Report of the Social Welfare Administration for the Fiscal Year 1957-1958**, Social Welfare Administration, Manila, 1960, pg. 4.

[35] Napoleon D. Valeriano and Charles T. R. Bohannan, **Counter-Guerrilla Operations: The Philippine Experience**, Pall Mall Press, London, 1962, pg. 83.

[36] Quoted in Kerkvliet, **The Huk Rebellion...**, pg. 240.

[37] Frank H. Golay, **The Philippines: Public Policy and National Economic Development**, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1961, pg. 287.

[38] **Agenda for Action For the Philippine Rural Sector**, Agricultural Policy and Strategy Team, University of Los Banos- Agricultural Policy Research Program and the Philippine Institute for Development Studies, October 1986, pg. 570.

> producers [and therefore] excluded... rural workers who comprise[d] a substantial portion of the rural populace. Sugar tenants were likewise left out...Furthermore,....capital was needed before a FACOMA could be organised..[O]nly those farmers with the resources to pay their share in the cooperative qualified for membership. The FACOMA structure replicated the inequality characterizing rural society. While the ACCFA aimed to help the small farmer primarily, any bona fide agricultural producer- landlord or tenant could become a member of the FACOMA... It was inevitable therefore that, more often than not, landed interests had the controlling power [within] the FACOMAS.[39]

In 1956, President Magsaysay, in an attempt to launch a government institution capable of promoting sustained rural development, and undercut potential support for a Huk resurgence, created the Presidential Arm on Community Development. The PACD was designed to replace the government's hitherto fragmented approach to community organising.[40] Although inspired by the success of PRRM, it effectively excluded civic organisations which Magsaysay viewed as potential rivals in his own plans to build popular rural support.[41] Together, PACD

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[39] Blondie Po & Cristina Montiel, **Rural Organisations in the Philippines**, Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University, 1980, pp. 62-63. According to the World Bank however, FACOMAs failed because "Management was weak and sometimes dishonest, government supervision was inadequate, delinquencies on loans rose...and four-fifths of co-operatives lost money". See **The Philippines: Priorities and Prospects for Development**, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 1976, Pg. 121.

[40] In 1954, an adviser warned Magsaysay that "people in the barrios are now confused with so many organizations ostensibly for their good. They are asked to organize themselves into 'barrio councils' by the Bureau of Agricultural Extension, and before their second meeting they are asked again to organize a 'rural council' according to the administrative code. [Then] they are herded by school teachers into a *purok* (neighbourhood self-help association)...[and] their wives...[are herded] into 'Rural Improvement Clubs' by the Bureau of Agricultural Extension. The children do not escape; they are herded into 4-H clubs. After this, the PRRM [Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement], the PRUCIS [Philippine Rural Improvement Society], the NAMFREL [National Movement for Freedom of Elections] and other organizations join the melee with their own barrio teams. Net result- confusion, duplication, waste and jealousies" (quoted in Jose V. Abueva, **Ramon Magsaysay: A Political Biography**, Solidaridad Publishing House, Manila, 1971, pg. 359).

[41] Civic organisations were to be actively involved in the PACD strategy. A 1957 report noted that the PACD would play "A subordinate role in which it provides certain essential services to peoples organisations (communities) necessary for the achievement of goals and objectives which they have set themselves" (Ramon P. Binamira, **The Philippine Community Development Program**, Office of the Presidential Assistant for Community

and American officials drafted proposals to improve local government, which resulted in the Barrio Charter of 1955. At the same time, the Bureau of Agricultural Extension established functional community organisations such as "4-H" clubs, farmers' associations, cooperatives and womens' rural improvement clubs.[42] Some, the 4-H clubs especially, later forged ties with independently-organised NGOs. Effective local government depended on the viability of these various institutions which in turn were dependent on funding mainly from the PACD. Most proved of short duration however since the PACD hoarded funding for distribution at election time to barrios that supported particular provincial or national politicians.[43] Another factor in the 1960s was that President Macapagal, in contrast to Magsaysay, felt that the PACD played a marginal role in promoting economic growth in rural areas,[44] and as a result it was marginalised from policy-making.

In addition to counter-insurgency, the government promoted civic organisations as an alternative to increased state intervention in the economy. Emmanuel Pelaez, Vice-President during the Macapagal administration, for instance, emphasised the need for self-reliance and

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Development, Manila, 1957, pg. 1). The PACD worked with the Jaycees, Rotary, the Ramon Magsaysay Foundation and a number of other voluntary organisations in its community development work (**Annual Report on Foreign Aid Programs in the Philippines FY 1966**, National Economic Council, Office of Foreign Aid Coordination, Manila, pg. 91) but cooperation was confined to groups that supported the Magsaysay government. PACD tight control estranged many civic organisations. Thus, while a 1959 PACD report notes that private organisations such as PRRM and the Philippine Rural Community Improvement Society (PRUCIS) were being "rallied and their efforts coordinated", (**Community Development: The War Against Want, Hunger, Illiteracy and Disease**, PACD, Manila, 1959, pg. 38) collaboration with the PACD was a relatively minor aspect of their work and a 1960s report acknowledged "ten years of silent misunderstanding" between PRRM and the PACD (**Annual Report on Foreign...FY 1966**, National Economic Council, Office of Foreign Aid Coordination, Manila, pg. 91).

[42] Po and Montiel, **Rural Organisations...**, pg. 31.

[43] **The Philippines: Priorities and Prospects...**, pg. 119; Po and Montiel, **Rural Organisations...**, pg. 35.

[44] See Diosdado Macapagal, **A Stone for the Edifice: Memoirs of a President**, MAC Publishing House, Manila, 1968, pg. 284.

civic responsibility, echoing positions adopted by successive post-war governments:

> the sooner we realize that progress lies in our initiating action to help ourselves within the framework of basic laws that protect our substantial rights, the sooner we wake up to the fact that progress lies not in government regulation and regimentation but in the least interference by the government in our lives, consistent with the common good, that much sooner will we achieve the progress and prosperity that we all dream of for our country and people.[45]

The government had little cause however to argue that Filipinos had become too dependent on the state. By 1964, a year after Pelaez stepped down from the Vice-Presidency, general government expenditure stood at only 13.4% of GNP, and government revenue was 12.7% of GNP, figures which had declined respectively to 13% and 12.2% by 1972.[46] Rather, government positions reflected agrarian elite antipathy to increased state intervention and attempts at undermining the regressive nature of the tax system.[47]

In another approach to coopting NGOs, the Americans, through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) helped to establish the National Movement For Free Elections (NAMFREL) in 1951 to create indirect support for a Presidential bid by the Defence Secretary Ramon Magsaysay and channeled funding through American civic organisations.[48] Ostensibly a non-partisan civic organisation, NAMFREL's campaign was directed largely at corruption and electoral fraud within the incumbent Liberal Party,[49] and provided important

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[45] Emmanuel Pelaez, **Government By The People: My Beliefs and Ideas On Our Public Affairs and National Development**, Quezon City, 1964, pg. 24.

[46] Amando Doronila, **The State, Economic Transformation and Political Change in the Philippines, 1946-1972**, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1992, pg. 143.

[47] Doronila notes that "during the 1960s and 1970s, 70-75% of tax revenues were derived from indirect taxation. In addition, the tax base during the 1960s was eroded by a series of legislation granting tax concessions intended to promote industrial growth". See Ibid.

[48] See Raymond Bonner, **Waltzing With A Dictator: The Marcoses and the Making of American Policy**, Times Books, New York, 1987, pg. 40; Cullather, **Illusions of Influence...**, pp. 112-113.

[49] The Americans felt that the incumbent and Liberal Party candidate Quirino lacked the resolve to fight the Huks and that corruption within his administration provided an important rallying point for the Huks.

support to *Nacionalista* candidate Magsaysay in the 1953 Presidential elections.[50] Doronila argues that by campaigning intensively in rural areas, a break with traditional election campaigns which led to a 30% increase in turnout, "Magsaysay... [by-passed] the local political middlemen who formed the synapses of the patron-client framework of the two-party system".[51] Magsaysay won the presidency over traditional elite opposition, but those same elites dominated Congress, providing effective opposition to the new President's programme. To bypass Congressional opposition, Magsaysay needed to generate institutional and organised, rather than individual and spontaneous, support from the rural peasantry but in this he was largely unsuccessful.[52] Following his election, Magsaysay introduced a redistributive land reform program but his administration lacked effective autonomy from Congress where his Agricultural Tenancy Act of 1955 was emasculated.[53] Consolidating a pattern of perpetual tension between the executive and Congress for financial control over government programmes, Congress also refused to fund Magsaysay's social welfare programmes, and his successor, Carlos Garcia was forced to abandon them entirely.[54]

President Macapagal (1961-1965) also cooperated closely with American advisers and and, like Magsaysay, used civic organisations to fight communism and maintain rural stability. In 1962, the government embarked on an economic and social rehabilitation programme in parts of Central Luzon where Huk elements remained active, with support

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[50] See Jorge R. Coquia, **The Philippine Presidential Election of 1953**, University Publishing Co., Manila, 1955, pp. 282-292.

[51] Doronila, **The State...**, pg. 96.

[52] Magsaysay attracted support from business-inspired civic organisations such as the Jaycees, Lions and Elks (Cullather, **Illusions of Influence...**, pp. 111 & 151) but more popular-based institutional support proved elusive.

[53] See Putzel, **A Captive Land...**, pp. 83-96.

[54] Carlos P. Romulo and Beth Day Romulo, **The Philippine Presidents: Memoirs of Carlos P. Romulo**, New Day, Quezon City, 1988. pg. 112.

from PRRM and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).[55] During the mid-1960s, US governments used the CIA and USAID (which channelled funds through the Ford, Rockfeller and Asia foundations), to promote civic organisations in the Philippines.[56] The main objective was to erode support for mass agrarian movements seen as communist.

Despite attempts by post-war governments to mobilize popular-based and organised support, the prevailing regime was relatively unaffected. Writing in 1968, Gunnar Myrdal argued that policy-making was shaped predominantly by "personalities and landlord controlled lobbies" and "producer associations built around commercial agricultural products". In turn, Myrdal argued, the scope for government action was determined primarily by shifting coalitions among these interests groups.[57] Landlords were the main source of funding for both political parties, the Liberals and the *Nacionalistas*. As a result, there was little ideological competition between the two, minimal intra-party solidarity, endemic inter-party switching and membership was effectively confined to politicians.[58] Along similar lines to Doronila, Grossholtz argued in 1964 that interest groups with a newly political orientation were articulating increasingly explicit demands, leading to a "breakdown of the old hierarchial relationships and gross economic inequality".[59] These included business groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, Veterans groups, church groups, and labour unions. In reality however, successive governments dissipated non-elite political demands through a

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[55] Macapagal, **A Stone for the Edifice...**, pg. 165.

[56] Funding to civic organisations dispersed through the CIA reputedly ended in the late 1960s.

[57] Gunnar Myrdal, **Asian Drama: An Inquiry Into The Poverty Of Nations**, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1968, Vol. 1, pg. 389.

[58] Carl Lande, **Leaders, Followers and Factions: The Structure of Philippine Politics**, Monograph Series No. 6, Southeast Asian Studies, Yale University, 1964, pg. 1.

[59] Jean Grossholtz, **Politics in the Philippines**, Little, Brown and Co., 1964, Chapter XI, especially pg. 235.

combination of repression and co-optation.

Thus, when Ferdinand Marcos became President in 1965, civic organisations were a weak, albeit tangible, threat. Marcos responded by coopting or displacing civic organisations engaged in relief and welfare activity, largely by expanding the socio-economic and community development role of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). In the government's Four Year Economic Program 1967-1970, co-ordination with NGOs in promoting community development is only briefly mentioned, while a whole chapter is given over to the Civic Action Program of the AFP.[60] Marcos proved adept at using civic organisations for his own ends. In 1967, for instance, he persuaded PRRM's President Gregorio Feliciano to become Head of the Social Welfare Administration, a move that led to consternation within PRRM's board (See Chapter 5). To Marcos, as to Magsaysay and Macapagal before him, NGOs were useful vehicles in undermining potential communist threats, and in 1969, he appointed PRRM Chairman Manuel Manahan to chair the Central Luzon Study Commission, a body charged with creating a bipartisan consensus on renewed rural unrest in the region.[61]

Overall, despite limited funding, civic organisations proliferated during the late 1960s. From 1967 to 1971 (inclusive), 750 non-stock entities (NSEs)[62] on average registered with

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[60] The program notes "...an extensive community development program ...is expected to reach about two thousand barrios a year over a period of four years. Community development activities will range from the utilization of out-of-school youth to the construction of self-help projects such as school buildings and communal irrigation systems. These activities will be undertaken in co-ordination with government and private volunteer organisations engaged in related services". See **Four Year Economic Program for the Philippines, Fiscal Years 1967-1970**, Manila, September 1966, pg. 30. Chapter 6 deals with the Civic Action Program of the AFP, and among other things calls for Philippine Army and Philippine Constabulary participation with the PACD and the National Land Reform Agency in promoting community self-help projects. See pg. 71.

[61] Eduardo Lachica, **Huk: Philippine Agrarian Society in Revolt**, Solidaridad Publishing House, Manila, 1971, pg. 251.

[62] See Chapter 3 for further details of NSEs.

the Securities and Exchange Commission each year, compared to 3,200 stock entities.[63] Martial law however led to a dramatic restructuring in relationships between the non-profit and business sectors; registrations of NSEs fell to 559 in 1972 and 607 in 1973 while stock entity registrations rose to 4145 and 6156 respectively. Yet by 1975, NGOs began to proliferate again.

3. NGOs and the Marcos Dictatorship.

On 21 September 1972, Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law. Congress was closed, key opposition leaders were arrested, existing political parties were banned, newspapers and radio/television stations were closed or nationalized, and a brutal counter-insurgency campaign was unleashed against rural and urban communities alike. All institutions that existed independently of the state and that could potentially mobilize opposition to it, were repressed, driven underground or shut down. The Catholic hierarchy and officials of the main Protestant churches, supported the regime, yet Marcos clamped down on local social action programmes, jailing priests and nuns, raiding church establishments,[64] and disrupting the work of church-based development NGOs.[65] When martial law was declared, the Philippine NGO community was relatively small. During the 1950s and '60s, the Philippines was seen internationally as an oasis of economic well-being and democratic stability, and was not an

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[63] **Paid Up Equity Investment Report** Series, Securities and Exchange Commission, Manila.

[64] Robert L. Youngblood, **Marcos Against The Church: Economic Development and Political Repression in the Philippines**, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1990, pp. 172-173.

[65] A telex from the World Council of Churches in Geneva to affiliated European funding agencies, dated 8 November 1972, notes that the declaration of martial law had significantly restricted the operation of church development programmes in the Philippines, necessitating a reassessment of programme activities (Christian Aid archives, SOAS, University of London).

important recipient of Official Development Assistance (ODA),[66] a major stimulant to NGO proliferation and growth in Africa and South Asia at this time. In the absence of major ODA inflows, NGOs possessed little financial capacity to counter the patronage-based appeal of the martial law regime. The small number that existed were primarily involved in relief and welfare rather than political activity and were largely controlled by prominent businessmen and philanthropists who were willing to acquiesce to the dictats of the martial law regime.

Nevertheless, Marcos tried to ensure that elite NGOs would not become a threat by curbing their financial autonomy, though the strategy was only partially successful. First, the government excluded civic organisations from participating in government-initiated socio-economic programmes. The Four Year Development Plan 1974-1977 excluded collaboration with NGOs, and opted instead for a process of state-directed institution building centred on barrio councils, citizens assemblies, barrio associations and cooperatives.[67] Second, shares of the proceeds of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes allocated to prominent NGOs were cut on the orders of Marcos, as happened to the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement in 1979. Third, in 1976, the government unsuccessfully attempted to impose a 1% tax on business profits to establish a government-controlled Community Fund, a move which would have curbed private sector funding of business-organised or -oriented NGOs (BONGOs) such as Philippine Business for Social Progress.[68]

While largely ignoring the limited threat which NGOs posed, especially in the 1970s,

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[66] The annual average of ODA receipts between 1967 and 1971, for instance, was equivalent to only 1% of GNP (**Development Assistance 1972**, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris, 1973, pg. 245).

[67] **Four Year Development Plan, Fiscal Years 1974-1977**, Manila, 1973. See especially Chapter 20.

[68] Ruth Callanta, "Philippine Business for Social Progress" in **NGO Strategic Management in Asia: Focus on Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Philippines**, Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Manila 1988, pg. 126.

Marcos concentrated on deploying state patronage in an attempt to coopt support from the urban and rural population and neutralise the armed opposition of the New Peoples Army. In 1973, in Presidential Decree (PD) No. 27, Marcos (himself one the country's largest landowners[69]) launched a limited land reform programme. Confined to rice and cornlands, the programme was limited to 34% of tenant farmers and barely 8% of an estimated 5.28m landless farmers.[70] To become beneficiaries however, farmers had to join *Samahang Nayon* (SN, Barrio or Pre-cooperative Associations), and the government planned to establish 16,000 SNs with a combined membership of 1m.[71] SNs were supposed to provide revenue to the government,[72] and to undermine the hundreds of independent rural cooperatives excluded from the land reform programme.[73] According to government figures, 15,451 SNs were established within a year and a half of the enactment of PD 27, with a membership of 663,489 farmers,[74] yet Kerkvliet argues that only a fraction of the planned target was reached by 1979.[75] Between 1979 and 1985, 459 independent rural co-operatives registered with the Bureau of Rural Workers,[76] suggesting that the Marcos strategy had failed. Yet, in parts of Central Luzon where the land reform program was successful,[77] SNs, *Kilusang*

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[69] Marcos reportedly owned over 30,000 hectares in Cagayan, Isabela and Negros. See Benedict Kerkvliet, "Land Reform: Emancipation or Counterinsurgency" in David A. Rosenberg (Ed.), **Marcos and Martial Law in the Philippines**, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1979, pg. 121.

[70] Ibid, pp. 129 & 131.

[71] **Agenda for Action...**, pg. 570.

[72] Would-be farmer-beneficiaries were supposed to pay a membership fee of P25 and annual dues of P100. See Benedict Kerkvliet, **Everyday Politics in the Philippines: Class and Status Relations in a Central Luzon Village**, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1990, pg. 187.

[73] Kerkvliet, "Land Reform: Emancipation or Counter-insurgency", pg. 127.

[74] See **Agenda For Action...**, pg. 570.

[75] Kerkvliet, "Land Reform: Emancipation or Counter-insurgency", pg. 127.

[76] **Agenda For Action**, pg. 569.

[77] Although only 138,300 farmers had or were about to become landowners by 1986, the beneficiaries were highly concentrated, especially in Nueva Ecija. See Kerkvliet, **Everyday**

Bayan (government-controlled cooperatives) and other government-controlled rural organisations,[78] provided important support to the Marcos regime until its collapse in 1986.

Marcos also tried to create patronage networks that linked local communities directly to the state through a new system of village-based local government. Reviving the precolonial *barangay* (village) structure because of its nationalist overtones, in place of barrios, the government renamed existing structures at the local, municipal, and provincial level and established a host of new structures: the *Katipunan ng mga Barangay* (League of Barangay Councils), the *Kabataang Barangay Pampook* (League of Barangay Youth Organisations), the *Katipunan ng mga Sanggunian* (League of Provincial and City Councils) and the *Kabataang Pambarangay* (Barangay Youth Organisation). As a result, by the mid-1970s, few other significant social organisations existed apart from those of the church[79] and, as Hollnsteiner notes, "Spontaneous expressions of mass interests [were] either coopted by elites or suppressed as subversive threats to the state".[80]

During the late 1970s however, the number of NGOs grew significantly (see Chapter 4) and the government was forced to make overtures to them for two important reasons.

Politics..., pp. 31-32. As a result, Marcos enjoyed the support of the peasantry of Nueva Ecija, even in the 1986 Presidential elections. See Benedict Kerkvliet, "Understanding Politics in a Nueva Ecija Rural Community" in Benedict Kerkvliet & Resil Mojares (Eds.), **From Marcos To Aquino: Local Perspectives on Political Transition in the Philippines**, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1991, pp. 226-231.

[78] These included the National Congress of Farmers Organisations (NCFO) and other "company unions" which "lent legitimacy to the regime...[helped] divide organised peasants, and participated in the military's persecution of militant peasant leaders" (See Francisco Lara Jr., and Horacio R. Morales Jr., "The Peasant Movement and the Challenge of Rural Democratization in the Philippines", **Journal of Development Studies**, Vol. 26 No. 4, 1990, pp. 147-148), as well as the Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association (ARBA), organised and controlled by the Ministry of Agrarian Reform (See **Agenda for Action...**, pg. 570).

[79] Wurfel, **Filipino Politics...**,pg. 119.

[80] Mary Racelis Hollnsteiner, "Mobilizing the Poor Through Community Organisation", **Philippine Studies**, 27 (1979), pg. 391.

First, from the late 1970s onwards, the government attempted to normalise its rule. In 1978, elections were held to a new National Assembly after political parties had been relegalized and in 1981, martial law was lifted. Tentative collaboration between NGOs and state agencies became part of a process of normalisation. Second, as the martial law regime's industrialization strategy floundered following global oil price rises in 1979, poverty levels increased,[81] and the country was gripped by economic crisis. As a result, the government became progressively more dependent on ODA (see Table 1). As ODA increased however, the bureaucracy, as the difference between commitments and actual flows in Table 1 illustrates, had difficulty in absorbing it,[82] and it was forced to involve NGOs in project implementation.

The government was also unable to control the disbursement of large amounts of development assistance, and aid from European funding NGOs especially went directly to Philippine counterparts. In addition, the way in which development was conceived by multi-lateral financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, changed. Locally-based popular participation and "basic needs" were increasingly

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[81] According to World Bank figures, Philippine GDP grew by 5.9% per annum between 1965 and 1980 but a mere 0.7% per annum between 1980 and 1989 (**World Development Report 1991**, World Bank and Oxford University Press, 1991, pg. 206). Yet, as Boyce notes, this growth was accompanied by significant impoverishment. Between 1961 and 1985, he estimates, real incomes of the poorest 30% fell by 23%, while the number of families living below the poverty line rose from 41% in 1965 to 59% in 1985 (James K. Boyce, **The Political Economy of Growth and Impoverishment in the Marcos Era**, Macmillan, London, 1993, pp. 43 and 47).

[82] ODA absorbtion rates between 1973 and 1983, for instance, varied widely between government departments and agencies, from a low of 19.5% to a high of 92% (Romeo A. Reyes, **Official Development Assistance to the Philippines: A Study of Administrative Capacity and Performance**, National Economic and Development Authority, Manila, 1985, pg. 215). Overall reasons for low absorbtion rates in the period to 1985 included a) the inadequacy of medium-term financial plans; b) the lack of co-ordination among ministries dealing with ODA donors; c) an inability to raise necessary counter-part funding.

emphasised.[83] An International Labour Organisation (ILO) mission to the Philippines in 1974 argued that the country's growth potential lay largely in the rural sector and that development needed to be based on popular participation, especially at the barrio level.[84] As a result, the Marcos

Table 1
ODA Flows to the Philippines 1978-1990 (US$m)

Year	(1)	(2)
1978	514.7	249.3
1979	399.4	267.4
1980	450.2	299.8
1981	475.0	376.1
1982	495.5	333.4
1983	534.9	429.0
1984	458.9	381.8
1985	365.9	460.4
1986	1103.1	955.8
1987	1074.7	770.2
1988	1870.7	854.3
1989	1611.2	844.5
1990	2176.2	1276.7

(1) ODA Commitments from all sources
(2) ODA Flows from all sources
Source: **Key Indicators of Developing Asian and Pacific Countries 1992**, Asian Development Bank, Manila, pp. 71 & 73.

government came under pressure to involve NGOs and other forms of community-based organisations in its socio-economic development programmes. Bowing to this pressure, government agencies promoted programmes that fostered local participation and initiative. In 1976, for instance, the National Irrigation Authority (NIA) tried to launch autonomous

[83] H. W. Arndt, **Economic Development: The History of an Idea**, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1987, pp. 97-98.

[84] See Gustav Rainis et al., **Sharing in Development: A Programme of employment, equity, and growth for the Philippines**, International Labour Office, Geneva, 1974, pg. 64.

irrigation associations in Central and Northern Luzon.[85] In 1981, an NGO called SARILAKAS (from *sariling lakas*, or "own strength") was launched by the Bureau of Rural Workers, with funds from the Dutch government and the International Labour Organisation's Programme on Organisations of the Rural Poor (PORP).[86] SARILAKAS was designed to establish autonomous People's Organisations (POs) and in 1983 the Bureau of Rural Workers established another NGO, PROCESS (Participatory Research Organisation of Communities and Education in the Struggle for Self-Reliance), to replicate SARILAKAS's success in community organising.[87] These initiatives were reflected in overall government policy. The government's Five Year Development Plan 1978-1982 called for closer coordination with NGOs in promoting community development and in social service provision.[88] The Updated Philippine Development Plan 1984-1987, went further, encouraging links with NGOs to strengthen the delivery of social services.[89] More specifically, the government noted the role of state-NGO links in attempts to curb population growth,[90] echoing developments in Indonesia where, under prodding from USAID, the government worked with NGOs to implement family planning programmes.

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[85] Boyce, **The Political Economy of Growth and Impoverishment...**, pg. 86. The NIA programme achieved mixed results. In some cases, organisations were successfully established. In others, irrigation associations fell under the control of local politicians, alienating small farmers.

[86] Charlotte Harland, "SARILAKAS: Grassroots participation in the Philippines" in Peter Oakley et al, **Projects with People: The Practice of Participation in Rural Development**, International Labour Organisation, Geneva, 1991.

[87] For details of PROCESS, see "Cooperation with NGOs in Agriculture and Rural Development", Asian Development Bank, Manila, August 1989, Volume 1, pp. 335-338.

[88] In Chapter 12, Social Services and Community Development (SSCD), the Plan calls for "Closer interagency coordination among SSCD (public and private) bodies to expand clientele outreach and maximise the efficient use of resources". See **Five Year Philippine Development Plan 1978-1982, Including the Ten Year Development Plan 1978-1987**, Manila, September 1977, pg. 234.

[89] **Updated Philippine Development Plan 1984-1987**, National Economic and Development Authority, Manila, September 1984, pg. 225.

[90] Ibid, pg. 223.

Despite these overtures however, the government maintained its leading role in implementing community development projects. This control facilitated the direct flow of state patronage into barrios and *barangays*, and provided the financial resources to mobilize grassroots support as regime legitimacy came under increased threat. Large scale community development initiatives supported by official development assistance donors also provided substantial opportunities to enrich the first couple. Imelda Marcos enriched herself by plundering ODA grants to community development projects[91] through her control of the Ministry of Human Settlements (MHS), a "super-ministry" created in 1981 which displaced the work of many civic organisations. In 1981, the MHS launched *Kilusang Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran* (KKK, Movement for Livelihood and Progress), with an initial budget of $1bn.. Ostensibly, KKK aimed to give interest-free loans to support livelihood projects, but, under Imelda's control, was used in practice to buy the support of local officials[92] and to acquire land for herself and her husband.[93] The government also established ostensibly independent Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Associations (ARBAs), but the strategy failed since the ARBAs were widely seen as creations of the Ministry of Agrarian Reform.[94] A host of other community organisations were also established: *Kilusang Sariling Sikap* (KSS, Self-Help Movement) (which came under the auspices of the KKK); *Samabang Kabubayan* (Countrymen's Organisation); *Bagong Lipunan* Community Associations (linked to *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan*, (KBL, the New Society Movement), the ruling party established in 1978), and *KABISIG* (Linking Arms) Service Brigades. The latter initiative illustrated the Marcoses

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[91] See Belinda A. Aquino, **The Politics of Plunder: The Philippines Under Marcos**, Great Books Trading, Quezon City, 1987, pp. 63-69.

[92] Within six months of the launch of KKK, Imelda ordered the release of P10,000 paid to barangay captains in Metro Manila, P100,000 to each mayor in the country and P500,000 to each governor. See Wurfel, **Filipino Politics...**, pg. 257.

[93] See Aquino, **The Politics of Plunder...**, pp. 66-67.

[94] **Agenda for Action...**, pg. 570.

desperate and ultimately unsuccessful attempts to stem the erosion of support for their regime, and in December 1985, the idea was expanded when Marcos launched *Kabisig sa Diwang Pilipino* (Comrades in Filipino Minds), rhetorically aimed at encouraging popular participation in government and propagating a spiritual, humanist, and nationalist ideology. Riven by corruption, dominated by KBL henchmen and blatantly designed to mobilize support for the first couple, these initiatives alienated the more socially-committed NGOs that grappled with rising poverty and landlessness, ineffective government service delivery programmes, and the violent control of associational life, and by 1986 relations between the state and NGOs were more polarised than at any time in the post-independence period.

4. Conclusion.

The Philippines has a long tradition of voluntary activity, dating to the 1880s and Spanish colonial rule. Promoted by the Philippine Corporation Law of 1906, civic and political organisations proliferated in Manila during the years of American colonial rule (1898-1946). After World War II, post-independence regimes promoted their continued proliferation, through legislation such as the Science Act of 1952, and through government funding channelled through agencies such as the Social Welfare Administration (SWA) and the Presidential Assistant on Community Development (PACD).

Philippine NGOs, and their antecedents, civic and political organisations have long been used in the pursuit of political objectives. The proliferation of relief and welfare organisations, Korten's "first generation" NGOs, in the early twentieth century was inextricably bound up with American colonial policy of transplanting American democracy and its institutions in the Philippines. These organisations also helped American officials and businessmen to maintain their social status in Manila and to enable the Filipino middle-class

to interact with them.

After World War II, new civic organisations focused on rural development. The state, the Catholic Church and elite philanthropic interests all promoted civic organisations in an attempt to undermine communist insurgency and to preserve existing democratic, and inherently elite, institutions by maintaining rural stability. Thus, in the Philippines, "second generation" NGOs were established primarily to fight rural insurgency and only secondarily to fight rural poverty or remedy faults in first generation strategies.

The policy of post-independence governments towards NGOs has been complex and multifaceted. Rural development NGOs, for instance, proliferated during the early and mid 1950s, stimulated in large part by government legislation and financial support. The Magsaysay administration (1954-1958) ostensibly supported civic organisations, yet Ramon Magsaysay regarded NGOs as a threat to his own plans to develop direct institutional ties between the government and the rural peasantry and PACD collaboration with NGOs was undermined by the resultant ambivalence. Similarly, during Ferdinand Marcos's two elected terms as President (1965-1969 and 1969-1972), NGOs continued to proliferate yet Marcos marginalized them, mainly by expanding the community development functions of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The years of the Marcos dictatorship (1972-1986) redefined the Philippine NGO community in many respects (see Chapter 4). NGO proliferation slowed initially as a result of the declaration of martial law, but after 1975 a new generation of NGOs emerged, stimulated by rising rural poverty and political marginalization. Until 1972, NGOs worked in close collaboration with the Philippine state, and, elitist in nature, had weak ties to their beneficaries. Under the authoritarian regime however, new NGOs worked closely with grass-roots "peoples organisations" and eschewed collaboration with the state to varying degrees.

Implementation of development projects in local communities provided the means to mobilize opposition to the state and NGOs developed significant capability, both in delivering social services and in organising beneficaries. After 1979, the government was forced by foreign funders and economic circumstances to involve many NGOs in the implementation of development projects. To secure its own position and to maintain political stability however, the government promoted state institutions that mobilized people at the barrio or *barangay* level, bringing NGOs and the state into direct competition for the support of specific constituencies.

By 1986, NGO proliferation had made the NGO community an important political actor. Most NGOs, however, were bitterly opposed to the Marcos regime and NGO strategy aimed primarily to build an infrastructure of political power and a socio-economic capacity that was autonomous from the government and had the potential to undermine it. In 1986, therefore, the Philippine state, traditionally undermined by a variegated range of autonomous and often powerful social forces, faced a new political force, complicating the regime consolidation dilemmas of the Aquino government.

CHAPTER THREE: NGOs and the Philippine State: 1986-1993.

1. Introduction.

After the collapse of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986, Philippine NGOs continued to proliferate and by the early 1990s, the Philippine NGO community had become one of the largest and best organised in the developing world. NGOs were major beneficiaries of the political liberalization that followed Corazon Aquino's accession to power. Aquino quickly forged ties with NGOs, a policy continued by her successor in 1992, Gen. Fidel Ramos, and over the intervening years, left-of-centre NGOs began to reassess their stance towards the Philippine state. In a relatively short period of time, NGOs became central political institutions, potential partners in a strategic alliance that could enhance the Philippine state's autonomy from the economic, predominantly agrarian, elites who had traditionally acted as a restraint on the development of state autonomy and capacity. But what would be the basis of such an alliance and how would it develop between 1986 and 1993?[1]

In one theoretical case for collaboration between states and NGOs, Evans argues that the "developmental states" of East Asia (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore) are characterised by "an autonomy embedded in a concrete set of social ties which bind the state to society and provide institutionalized channels for the continual negotiation and renegotiation of goals and policies".[2] In certain middle-income countries such as Brazil however, "embedded autonomy is a partial rather than a global attribute", largely because the

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[1] This dissertation is based on fieldwork carried out in the Philippines during 1993 and focuses on events upto the end of that year.

[2] Peter Evans, "The State as Problem and Solution: Predation, Embedded Autonomy, and Structural Change", in Stephan Haggard and Robert Kaufman (Eds.), **The Politics of Economic Adjustment: International Constraints, Distributive Conflicts and the State**, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1992, pg. 164.

"persistence of clientelistic and patrimonial characteristics has prevented the construction of Weberian corporate coherence" within the state apparatus.[3] In India especially, Evans notes, the state "lacks the ties that might enable it to mount a shared project with social groups interested in transformation".[4]

Evans' partial embedded autonomy concept is particularly useful in analyzing development dilemmas in the Philippines. The Philippine state has been variously described as "soft",[5] "weak",[6] or "captive",[7] and Rivera notes that it has failed significantly "to construct or oversee a social coalition" capable of sustaining industrial growth.[8] This argument raises the question of how the Philippine state might mount a shared project with groups interested in transformation. Steven Rood argues that a strong community of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) could help provide the state with some insulation from socio-economic elites.[9] This correlates with Evans' suggestion that embedded autonomy stems from the development of "a project shared by a highly developed bureaucratic apparatus and a relatively organised set of private actors who could provide useful intelligence and

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[3] Ibid, pg. 172. "[R]ather than being able to focus on its relationship with industrial capital", Evans argues, the Brazilian state "has always had to simultaneously contend with traditional elites threatened by the conflictual transformation of rural class relations" (pg. 170).

[4] Ibid, pg. 176.

[5] David Wurfel, **Filipino Politics: Development and Decay**, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1988, pg. 327, drawing on Gunnar Myrdal.

[6] Stephan Haggard, "The Political Economy of the Philippine Debt Crisis", in Joan Nelson (Ed.), **Economic Crisis and Policy Choice: The Politics of Adjustment in the Third World**, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1990, pg. 216.

[7] James Putzel, **A Captive Land: The Politics of Agrarian Reform in the Philippines**, Catholic Institute for International Relations, London, 1992, pg. xx.

[8] Temario Rivera, "Class, The State and Capital: The Politics of Philippine Industrialization, 1950-1986", Ph.D. thesis, Graduate School, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1991, pg. 220.

[9] Steven Rood, "The State and Non-Government Organisations", paper presented at the Fourth International Philippine Studies Conference, 1-3 July 1992, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.

decentralized implementation",[10] and with Haggard's argument that the power of the Philippine bureaucracy has been circumscribed by a lack of qualified personnel and by the marginalization of reform-oriented technocrats within the policy-making process.[11]

Through an analysis of state policy towards NGOs as articulated by the executive, the military and the bureaucracy, this chapter tests the hypothesis, based on Evans' and Rood's analysis, that formal or informal relationships with NGOs can improve state capacity by:

(1) creating "pockets of efficiency"[12] within government ministries that undermine corruption and patronage-based decision-making processes;

(2) providing a degree of strategic partnership that enables government ministries and other state agencies to attack entrenched socio-economic elites, including landlords, mining corporations, and logging concessionaires;

(3) filling voids in the government's social service provision role;

(4) providing intermediate institutional ties that link the government to traditionally disempowered strata of society, thus mobilising popular support for a government committed to structural reform.

2. **The Background to State Policy.**

The environment for NGO action in the Philippines is liberal in comparison to other countries in South and South-East Asia, especially in the period since 1986. State permission

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[10] Evans, "The State as Problem...", pg. 165.

[11] Haggard, "The Political Economy of...", pg. 217.

[12] The term comes from Evans, "The State as Problem...", pp. 166-172, and his analysis of the Brazilian bureaucracy.

is not required to establish an NGO and few controls existed on foreign funding to NGOs.[13] Under the 1980 Corporation Code of the Philippines, NGOs acquire a legal personality by registering with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).[14] Registration in itself however does not confer NGO status,[15] and the SEC estimates that NGOs account for roughly 75% of registered non-stock entities.[16] Table 2 sets out the total number of non-stock entities registered with the SEC between 1984 and 1993, and the number of NGOs as per the SEC estimate.[17] The figures show an 88% increase in the number of NGOs registered between January 1986 and March 1992, the years of the Aquino presidency. This increase is partly explained by anti-Marcos and development NGOs registering in the more liberal atmosphere post-1986. Another factor triggering the growth, however, was establishment of "elite" NGOs. One category was made up of NGOs which aimed to channel

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[13] One of the few restrictions is that agencies wishing to place foreign personnel with Philippine NGOs must receive permission in advance from the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency, a device used under Marcos to keep out or expel foreigners perceived as sympathetic to the NDF-CPP-NPA. Foreign funders such as the Ford Foundation have to submit annually and retrospectively a list of projects funded, and experience little formal opposition although informal warnings are sometimes issued about support for particular NGOs (Terence George, Program Officer, Ford Foundation, interview with author, Manila, 12 July 1993).

[14] **NGO Handbook: A Legal Guide**, Structural Alternative Legal Assistance Group (SALAG), Manila, undated, pg. 3. Registration with the SEC is needed to secure a Tax Identity Number and employ staff and, increasingly, to sign contracts with foreign funders.

[15] According to the SEC, "...SEC registration of non-stock corporations...does not automatically confer [on] these registered companies the status of Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO). They partake an NGO personality only upon accreditation with the appropriate Government Agency/Institution. The Commission has no record of duly accredited NGOs". (Letter from the SEC Chairman to the Chairman of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, 28 September 1993).

[16] Letter from the Director of the Investments and Research Department, Securities and Exchange Commission, to an Assistant Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, 10 February 1993. This rough estimate includes POs, civic organisations, clubs, foundations and business associations (hence defining the NGO community very broadly) but excludes religious, medical and educational establishments.

[17] The figures are illustrative at best. They underestimate true numbers since many NGOs and POs, especially in remote rural areas, are not registered, while they overstate the numbers since NGOs and POs that cease to exist are not deregistered.

financial and managerial resources on a profit-making basis to socio-economic development projects, capitalising on the dramatic growth in ODA, both in absolute (See Table 1, Chapter 2) and relative terms,[18] and government funding to NGOs.[19] Most ODA donors insisted on NGO involvement as a condition of most programme loans, and as the government sought NGO partners, many were established specifically to avail of ODA support, often with the connivance of local government officials. A second category was made up of NGOs established by politicians, members of local government units, and the military. The motives were invariably political: first, a new means to the old end of maintaining control over the allocation of resources dispersed to the local or national level by national or international sources; and second, recourse to a traditional elite strategy of coopting popular institutional initiatives that threaten the status quo. The third category consists of phantom NGOs set up to avail of tax shelters.[20]

After registering with the SEC, stock and non-stock entities are required to submit annual accounts. This is the sole means by which the SEC can monitor the profit/non-profit status of a registered entity.[21] The SEC however lacks the resources to follow up corporations that do not file and even reputable development NGOs fail to submit annual returns. Non-stock entity status is therefore widely abused. Many NGOs welcome this loose

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[18] During the years of the Aquino presidency, ODA flows as a percentage of GNP reached record levels; 2.8% in 1986-87, 2.5% in 1987-88, 2.3% in 1988-89, 3.3% in 1989-90 and 3.0% in 1990-91. By 1991-92 however, it had fallen to 1.6%, equivalent to the rate of dependence in the late 1960s. (Source: **Development Cooperation** Annual Series, 1988-1993, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris).

[19] See below for details of government funding to NGOs.

[20] NGOs generally do not have to pay corporation or property taxes. Donations can also be made to NGOs on a tax-free basis which means that NGO can be used as a device to own property without paying tax. See "Taxation for NGOs" in **NGO Handbook: A Legal Guide**, pp. 27-41.

[21] Teresita Saplala, Chief, Investment and Research Department, Securities and Exchange Commission, interview with author, Manila, 14 October 1993.

regulatory environment, equating it with the opportunity to create a rival institutional power-base to a state that could reassume its authoritarian character. One 1992 survey, however, estimated that only 10% of registered NGOs could be considered as "genuine development NGOs".[22]

The laxity and uncertainty which characterises SEC oversight of the NGO community is mirrored by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG). NEDA is responsible for monitoring official and unofficial development assistance from abroad channelled to Philippine NGOs, yet has no procedures for monitoring funding that goes directly to NGOs and only limited procedures for monitoring funding coursed through government bodies.[23] By 1993, NEDA's Social Development Staff (SDS) had still not established adequate mechanisms to monitor the development NGO community or foreign funding channelled to it, and was instead relying on its regular liaison with the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) for information about ODA inflows and the overall size of the development NGO community.[24]

These problems were exacerbated by the passage of the 1991 Local Government Code, (Republic Act No. 7160). The Code entitles NGOs and POs to:

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[22] Mindanao Interfaith Peoples Conference (MIPC), Davao, 1992. The MIPC survey estimated that of more than 50,000 NGOs registered with the SEC in May 1992, only 3,000, or about 6-10% are "genuine development NGOs". (Source: "NGOing: The Latest Scam", INFO-Davao e-mail bulletin, 23 March 1993.

[23] NEDA is responsible for monitoring funding under three modes set out in NEDA Board Resolution No. 2 (Series of 1989), "Guidelines for Government Organisation and Non-Government Organisation (GO-NGO) Collaboration", yet monitors only Mode 1 inflows (covering agreements signed by the Philippine government and donors with funding going to government-accredited NGOs). According to NEDA figures, Mode 1 commitments to NGOs between 1986 and 1992 amounted to US$30.5m. (Josefina U. Esguerra, Director, Public Investment Staff, National Economic and Development Authority, letter to author, 15 November 1993.)

[24] Thelma Cruz, Supervising Development Specialist, Social Development Staff, National Economic and Development Authority, interview with author, Manila, 19 October 1993.

Table 2
Non-Stock Entities (NSEs)[25] and NGOs: 1984-1993.

Date	NSEs	NGOs
June 1993	77,697	58,200
April 1993	76,369	57,200
September 1992	70,673	53,000
March 1992	67,748	50,800
March 1991	59,199	44,400
August 1990	54,925	41,100
February 1989	45,444	34,000
August 1988	43,528	32,600
January 1988	41,863	31,300
July 1987	39,912	29,900
January 1987	38,353	28,700
July 1986	37,191	27,900
January 1986	36,179	27,100
December 1985	35,937	26,900
June 1985	34,877	26,100
December 1984	33,787	25,300
January 1984	31,719	23,800

Source: **Monthly Paid-Up Equity Investment Report** Series, Securities and Exchange Commission, Manila.

(1) representation on elective bodies at the municipal, provincial and regional level,[26] including 25% of Development Council seats at each level;

(2) sectoral representation in the local legislative assemblies (the *sanggunian panlalawigan* or provincial assembly, the *sanggunian panlungsod* or city assembly, and the *sanggunian*

[25] Under Section 87 of the 1980 Corporation Code, a non-stock entity "is one where no part of its income is distributable as dividends to its members, trustees, or officers subject to the provisions of this code...[A]ny profit which a non-stock corporation may obtain as an incident to its operations shall...be used for the furtherance of the ... purposes for which the corporation was organised".

[26] Local School Boards must include an elected representative of the local Teachers, and Parent-Teachers organisations, (Section 98). Local Health Boards must have one representative from the private sector or from an NGO concerned with health (Section 103). Local Peace and Order Councils must have NGO representation as provided for in Executive Order No. 309 (Section 116).

bayan or municipal assembly);[27]

(3) consultation on programmes and projects planned or administered by national government agencies.[28]

The Code also allows Local Government Units (LGUs) to establish NGOs and POs, to enter into joint ventures or cooperative arrangements with them or to provide them with assistance, financial or otherwise.[29]

By mid-1993, 16,834 NGOs were accredited for participation in local government structures.[30] The accreditation process coordinated by the DILG, however, went far from smoothly. Different definitions of NGO were applied in different parts of the country, and many development NGOs were denied accreditation by local officials because of their perceived ideological orientation.[31] Neither the DILG nor any other national office had the power to legally enforce a standard definition of an NGO, allowing local officials to accredit often dubious organisations and exclude politically-active but well-established development NGOs.

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[27] Sections 446, 457 and 467 respectively.

[28] Sections 26 and 27.

[29] Sections 34-36.

[30] **National Government Agency-Local Government Unit-Non Government Organisation Partnership Development Program: Survey Report**, prepared by the Bureau of Local Government Development, Department of Interior and Local Government, and reproduced by the Local Government Academy, Manila, October 1993, pp. 5 and 11.

[31] See Rostum J. Bautista and Jorge V. Tigno, "Empowerment and Participation in Governance: NGOs and POs in Leyte and Samar", and Carlo L. Navarro, "Status of GO-NGO-PO Collaboration in the Province of Pangasinan and Dagupan City", in **Operationalizing People Empowerment and the Local Government Code of 1991: Summary of Case Findings from Selected Local Government Units, A Preliminary Report**, Institute for Strategic and Development Studies, University of the Philippines, September 1993. The report notes that in many provinces only a small minority of NGOs have sought accreditation. The 16,834 NGOs nationwide counted by the DILG (see above) is therefore a significant underestimate of the total number of NGOs in the Philippines, and makes the SEC figures more credible.

3. NGOs and the Executive.

Within weeks of assuming the Presidency on 25 February 1986, Corazon Aquino involved NGOs in the process of government to an unprecedented extent. Firstly, Aquino appointed representatives from the NGO community to cabinet positions. Three human rights lawyers from the Free Legal Assistant Group (FLAG), Joker Arroyo, Augusto Sanchez and Rene Saguisag became Executive Secretary, Labour Minister, and Presidential Spokesperson respectively, while Dr. Mita Pardo de Tavera, of *Alay Kapwa Kilusang Pangkalusugan*[32] became Social Welfare Minister. Other prominent NGO activists joined the government at sub-cabinet level, notably Karina Constantino-David of the Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA) who became Deputy Minister for Social Services and Development. Secondly, in Executive Order No. 8 of 16 March, Aquino established a Presidential Committee on Human Rights (PCHR) in response to pressure from human rights and other NGOs, and appointed Jose Diokno of FLAG as Chairman, and Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, Chairperson of Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP), as a member. The government also established a Judicial Reorganisation Committee (JRC) and a Presidential Committee on Political Detainees, both with FLAG and TFDP representation. Thirdly, in Proclamation No. 9 of 21 April, Aquino appointed 48 members to a Commission charged with drafting a new constitution, over 20% of whom were popularly associated with the NGO/PO community.[33] These appointments suggested a number of ambiguities. Aquino rewarded leading opposition figures for their role in bringing

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[32] Which translates roughly as The Health Movement for Fellow Filipinos. De Tavera also served previously as Chairperson of GABRIELA, the General Assembly Binding Women for Reform, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action, the leading women's cause-oriented group, or PO, in the Philippines.

[33] These included NGO leaders Ponciano Bennagen, Ed Garcia, Jose Luis Gascon, Minda Luz Quesada, Rene Sariemento, and Sr. Christine Tan, as well as PO leaders Jaime Tadeo and Jose Suarez.

down the Marcos regime, and the appointments in many cases resulted from institutional pressures on the government.[34] Yet, in many cases, the appointees where close friends,[35] while to others, Aquino, the daughter of a leading *hacendado*, was acting out the traditional role of patron with which her upbringing had made her well-acquainted.[36]

Overall, the first twelve months were characterised by active, albeit tentative and suspicious, support for the Aquino government from NGOs of all political persuasions and the broad social movements in which they participated. Symbolising the new *entente cordiale,* the new constitution provided for NGO participation in national life to an extent that was unique in the developing world. Article XIII Section 15 noted that "The State shall respect the role of independent people's organisations to enable the people to pursue and protect, within the democratic framework, their legitimate and collective interests and aspirations through peaceful and lawful means". Section 16 noted that "The right of the people and their organisations to effective and reasonable participation at all levels of social, political, and economic decision-making shall not be abridged. The state shall by law, facilitate the establishment of adequate consultation mechanisms." Recognition was also provided in Article

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[34] The appointment of Dr. Mita Pardo de Tavera, for instance, followed lobbying on her behalf by Concerned Women of the Philippines. (Ruby Paredes, "Ilustrado Legacy: The Pardo de Taveras of Manila", in Alfred McCoy (Ed.), **An Anarchy of Families: State and Family in the Philippines**, Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1993, pg. 349).

[35] As Paredes notes, Pardo de Tavera's niece was married to Aquino's brother (Paredes, ibid, pg. 350), a distant relationship in other countries, but in the Philippines, the type of familial relationship around which political partnerships have traditionally cemented. Aquino was also a close friend of Jose Diokno, a relationship that dated to 1972 when her husband Benigno Jr. and Diokno where detained in adjoining cells while their respective wives supported each other. (Maria Socorro Diokno, General Secretary, Free Legal Assistance Group, interview with author, Manila, 29 March 1993).

[36] To Jaime Tadeo, his appointment was a traditional act of patronage from Aquino, a debt which she expected to be repaid in the form of support for her government. He attributes his imprisonment in 1990 in part to Aquino's anger at the affront to her patronage when he led the demonstration preceding the "Mendiola Massacre" (see further below) (Jaime Tadeo, interview with author, London, 11 March 1994).

II, Section 23, which sets out general state policies,[37] and in Article X Section 14 which provides for NGO participation in local government structures.[38]

By February 1987 however, significant tensions over the role of NGOs began to emerge, as the interests of the AFP and conservative businessmen within the administration came to dominate the government. On 22 January 1987, 15,000 farmers led by Jaime Tadeo of KMP marched on the Presidential Palace to protest government back-tracking on redistributive agrarian reform. At Mendiola Bridge, police and soldiers opened fire and 18 demonstrators were killed. Immediately, the members of the PCHR resigned.[39] On 27 January, rebel soldiers launched their third coup attempt against the government, designed to disrupt the referendum on the draft constitution scheduled for 2 February and to end the government's peace overtures to the National Democratic Front-Communist Party of the Philippines-New Peoples Army (NDF-CPP-NPA). Although the coup was defeated, and the referendum went ahead as scheduled,[40] the coup attempt achieved its other objective, and in a speech on 18 March 1987, Aquino promised to "unleash the sword of war" against insurgents.[41]

The basis for state-NGO collaboration was further eroded when Congressional elections held on 11 May 1987 restored a House of Representatives dominated by "caciques",

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[37] Article II Section 23 reads "The state shall encourage non-governmental, community-based or sectoral organisations that promote the welfare of the nation".

[38] Article X Section 14 reads "The President shall provide for regional development councils or other similar bodies composed of local government officials, regional heads of departments and other government offices, and representatives from non-governmental organizations within the regions for the purposes of administrative decentralization to strengthen the autonomy of the units therein and to accelerate the economic and social growth and development of the units in the region".

[39] The PCHR members however soon resumed their positions,

[40] The new constitution was overwhelming ratified by the electorate. 87% of registered voters turned out to vote, and 76.4% voted in favour.

[41] Miriam Coronel-Ferrer & Antoinette Raquiza (Eds), **Motions for Peace**, Coalition for Peace et al, Manila, 1993, pg. 11.

the country's traditional agrarian elite.[42] By 1989, agriculture in the Philippines accounted for only 24% of GNP.[43] Compared to 26% in 1965 however, the importance of agriculture had barely declined,[44] with the Philippines remaining a predominantly rural and agrarian society with 58% of the population living in rural areas.[45] More importantly, landowning families, by diversifying into manufacturing and tertiary activity, maintained their dominance over the economy. As Rivera notes

> Among...stockholding families and economic groups that control the top 120 manufacturing firms, there are 22 individual families and family groups with substantial land holdings. These landed capitalists families and executives make up close to half (48%) of all indigenous capitalists, excluding Chinese-Filipino families...On the other hand, as a percentage of all the 87 family groups in the study including Chinese-Filipinos, the landed capitalists still constitute 25% of the total...Furthermore, the big landed capitalist families control 40 out of 120 leading manufacturing firms or 33% of the total.[46]

Given the traditional relationship between socio-economic power and election results, centred on election spending, landowning family groups dominated the newly elected Congress. According to Pangilanan et al,

> Of the 200 House Representatives, 130 belong to the so-called "traditional political families" while another 39 are relatives of these families. Only 31 Congressmen have no electoral record prior to 1971 and are not related to these old dominant families....(O)f the 24 elected Senators, there are a few non-traditional figures, but the cast is largely made up of prominent pre-1972 families.[47]

While scope for state-NGO collaboration was undermined, such collaboration paradoxically became more important for a state strategy of increasing the degree of embedded autonomy

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[42] See Benedict Anderson, "Cacique Democracy in the Philippines: Origins and Dreams", **New Left Review**, No. 169, May/June 1988.

[43] **World Development Report 1991**, pg. 208.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid, pg. 264.

[46] Rivera,"Class, The State and Foreign Capital...", pp. 96-97.

[47] Noel T. Pangilanan et al, **All in the Family: A Study of Elites and Power Relations in the Philippines**, Institute for Popular Democracy, Manila, 1992.

it enjoyed vis-a-vis socio-economic elites.

The period from January 1987 to December 1989 represented a trough in relations between the executive and NGOs. With the collapse of peace talks between the government and the NDF, fighting between the armed forces and the NPA was renewed. As a result, the Aquino government lurched dramatically to the right, partly because it had little direct institutional ties to the NGO community that might have compensated for the increasing power of conservative business groups, the Marcos-era mandarins who remained in the bureaucracy, and the armed forces. Increasingly, the military view of "progressive" NGOs as agents of subversion and unquestioning stooges of the NDF predominated over the view of NEDA and government ministries of NGOs as important partners. In 1988, Aquino established the Presidential Social Fund (PSF) to fund NGO initiatives directly. Administered by the Presidential Management Staff, it enabled the executive to forge direct ties with development NGOs. With guaranteed funding from the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) (which, by 1993, amounted to P250m or US$9m[48]), the PSF was independent of Congress, and of the patronage-based politics that marred programmes where Congress and the executive shared responsibility. Viewed in these terms, the PSF was a success, and by 1993, the *Manila Bulletin* could proclaim it as "perhaps the most outstanding and graft-free unit of the government".[49] However, the PSF was used extensively to fund the civic action and engineering activities of the armed forces, and trumpeted publicly as cementing links between the armed forces and conservative NGOs rather than the executive.[50]

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[48] Source: advertising campaign in the national press and on radio and television run by PAGCOR in June 1993.

[49] Wilman N. Yamzon, "Focus on the Countryside", **The Manila Bulletin**, 30 April 1993.

[50] See Ibid.

Military influence continued to increase, peaking in 1989 when fighting between the AFP and the NPA was at its most intense. At cabinet meetings in July and October 1989 at which prospects for government-NGO collaboration were discussed, defense and military intelligence sources argued that foreign financial support to legitimate NGOs was being channelled to the NDF-CPP-NPA. In response, a brief prepared by the Cabinet Secretary for the cabinet meeting of 25 October recommended the creation of a database on NGOs, "intensive military surveillance by defense and military intelligence networks of suspected subversive organisations", and a "Review of existing legislation to determine which laws can allow for the monitoring of NGO activities and transactions".[51]

In December 1989 however, a sixth coup attempt, the most violent and costly to date and defeated only after intense fighting,[52] dramatically underlined the government's lack of institutionalized support vis-a-vis the military. Aquino was desperate to revive the flagging spirit of "People Power" and in a Cabinet reshuffle in January 1990, appointed NGO activist Florencio Abad as Secretary for Agrarian Reform.[53] Later in the year she grappled with a more strategic problem. Without her own political party in Congress, Aquino faced the traditional plight of Philippine Presidents implementing a reform-oriented legislative programme in the face of implacable opposition from political parties controlled by socio-

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[51] "Prospects for Government-NGO Collaboration", Brief from the Cabinet Secretary, Jose P. De Jesus, to the 22nd Cabinet Meeting, 25 October 1989, Malacanang. The original context for the discussion was a concern to identify government-approved NGOs to which DM25m of existing German ODA channelled to Philippine NGOs could be directed.

[52] According to Department of National Defense figures, 99 people were killed during the coup attempt, and 570 wounded. The Davide Commission which investigated the coup attempt estimated the cost of damage at P800m to P1b (US$28-35m) (**The Final Report of the Fact-Finding Commission** (pursuant to R.A. 6832), Bookmark, Manila, 1990, pp. 376 and 378).

[53] Abad, a prominent leader of the NGO/PO coalition *Kilusang Laban sa Kudeta* (KILOS, Coalition Against Coups d'etat) resigned three months later, after the Congressional Committee on Appointments, in a long-delayed vote, vetoed his appointment.

economic elites. In June 1990, Aquino launched *Kabisig* (Linking Arms), a non-partisan Peoples Movement, the government claimed, that was independent of the ruling *Laban ng Demokratong Pilipino* (LDP, Fight for Philippine Democracy) party, and open to NGOs and POs that supported the government. *Kabisig* aimed to speed up the implementation of government programmes, especially the proposed Local Government Code, by creating a pro-reform lobby and by creating direct links between policy-makers at the national level and policy-implementors at the local level. More generally, the movement promoted a philosophy of "self-reliance", a Philippine equivalent, some officials hoped, of Indonesia's state ideology *Pancasila*.[54] *Kabisig* was a failure however since Congress refused to allocate funds, and since the bulk of the NGOs and POs at which Kabisig was aimed were by now too distrustful of the government.[55]

Overall however, state overtures to NGOs resulted in a number of accomplishments. By 1990, 18 government departments and 5 specialised government agencies had established NGO Liaison Desks,[56] and the government had approved broad principles governing NGO

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[54] *Pancasila*, literally "five pillars" or principles, espouses: belief in one God; just and civilized humanitarianism; a united Indonesia; democracy guided by wisdom through consultation and representation; and social justice for all Indonesians. To prominent *Kabisig* supporters however such as Governor of Bulacan Roberto Pagdanganan, *Pancasila* promoted national self-reliance, a rhetorical objective of the *Kabisig* programme (Gerard Clarke, "Kabisig: Aquino's Lasting Legacy?", **Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society**, Vol. 22 No. No. 1, 1994, pg. 42).

[55] On the establishment and collapse of Kabisig, see ibid.

[56] The government departments were as follows: Agrarian Reform; Agriculture; Budget and Management; Education, Sports and Culture; Environment and Natural Resources; Finance; Foreign Affairs; Health; Justice; Labor and Employment; Local Government; National Defense; Public Works and Highways; Science and Technology; Social Welfare and Development; Tourism; Trade and Industry; and Transport and Communications. The specialised agencies were: National Nutrition Council; National Economic and Development Authority; National Housing Authority; Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council; and the Population Commission. **Directory of Non-Government Organisations in the Philippines**, National Economic and Development Authority, Manila, 1990, pp. 232-235.

participation in government programmes.[57] Aquino also brought more NGO leaders into government. In addition to the three FLAG lawyers, Dr. Mita Pardo de Tavera, and Florencio Abad, Aquino recruited Vicente Jayme, a prominent member of the PRRM board, Fulgencio Factoran, a former activist with the Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace (EMJP), and Salvador Enriquez, a former head of the National Economic Protectionism Association (NEPA).[58]

Aquino also involved NGOs in the making and implementation of socio-economic policy. In 1986, NGO and PO representatives participated in the preparation of the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) for 1987-1992.[59] The Plan outlined what was arguably the most comprehensive programme of collaboration between state agencies and NGOs/POs in the developing world, rivalling the Indian government's seventh Five-Year

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[57] Board Resolution No. 2 (Series of 1989) of the National Economic and Development Authority, reproduced in ibid, pp. 237-240.

[58] Jayme joined the cabinet in December 1986 and served as Minister for Public Works and Highways before becoming Finance Secretary (Ministries became Departments and Ministers became Secretaries after the promulgation of the 1987 constitution). Factoran, who had also been active in the Movement of Attorneys for Brotherhood, Integrity and Nationalism (MABINI), Justice for Aquino-Justice for All (JAJA), and KAAKBAY, joined the cabinet in March 1987 and served as Secretary for Environment and Natural Resources until 1992. Salvador Enriquez joined the cabinet in February 1992 and served as Secretary for Budget and Management.

[59] NGO/POs represented in sub-committees included Philippine Business for Social Progress, KMP, the Federation of Free Farmers, the Medical Action Group, GABRIELA, and Philippine-Canada Human Resources Development (PCHRD). NGO activists occupying government positions, who later resumed their NGO work, also helped, including Social Services and Development Deputy Minister Karina Constantino-David, (who became Executive Director of Harnessing Self-Reliant Initiatives and Knowledge Inc. (*HASIK*) and President of the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO)), Gerry Bulatao of the Ministry of Agrarian Reform (MAR) (who became head of *Kaisahan tungo sa Kaunlaran ng Kanayunan at Repormang Pansakahan* (*KAISAHAN*)) and Leonor Briones of the Commission on Audit, later prominent in the Freedom From Debt Coalition (**Medium Term Philippine Development Plan 1987-1992**, Manila, 1986, Appendices).

Plan (1985-1990).[60] In the plan, NGOs were seen largely as an extension of the private sector and allocated socio-economic roles, especially the identification, implementation and monitoring of specific projects.[61] The P5bn. (US$178m) Community Employment and Development Programme (CEDP), for instance, one of the successes in the early years of the MDPTP, helped create 1.2m jobs in 1987, exceeding the MDPTP target of 1m.[62] With the bulk of CEDP expenditure channelled through the Department of Public Works and Highways, a department notorious for corruption and the patronage-based allocation of resources, the CEDP was potentially another "pork barrel" to reward local politicians for their support of the Aquino government. NGOs however were contracted by the Department of Budget and Management to monitor project implementation, and, as a result, helped reduce corruption in the CEDP.[63]

One of the extensive forms of collaboration in the 1987-1992 MTPDP was in the provision of housing for lower income groups. In 1991, the informal sector, largely composed of urban poor organisations working closely with NGOs, constructed 22,000 units, or 20% of total units constructed, compared to 26,000 by government agencies, and 65,000 by private developers.[64] The sector raised almost P2bn. (£5m or US$7.2m), much of which

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[60] In which the Indian government planned to channel Rs2bn. (US$150m.) through NGOs. See John Echeverri-Gent, **The State and the Poor: Public Policy and Political Development in India and the United States**, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1993, pg. 187.

[61] Ibid, pp. 35 & 39. The Plan noted that "The private sector shall not only serve as the initiator but also as the prime mover of development. Specifically, the business sector, non-government organisations (NGOs) and private voluntary organisations shall take the lead in undertaking and sustaining programs and projects aimed at improving the socioeconomic situation" (pg. 39).

[62] **1987 Philippine Development Report**, National Economic and Development Authority, Manila, 1988, pp. 17, 53 & 143.

[63] Ibid, pg. 17. NGO involvement however did not increase the project completion rate, which, for the CEDP, stood at 33% in 1987 (ibid, pg. 53).

[64] **1991 Philippine Development Report**, National Economic and Development Authority, Manila, June 1992, pg. 271.

came from the government, including P27m made available to NGOs under the Home Development and Mutual Fund Joint Venture Program, administered by the National Housing Authority.[65] The Department of Trade and Industry also funded NGOs engaged in small enterprise development, including P29.8m channelled through its *Tulong Sa Tao* Self-Employment Loan Assistance programme, P30m through the NGO Micro Credit Programme and P130m through its Micro-Enterprise Development programme. In total, the department provided grants or loans to 1,027 NGOs in 1991.[66] Government funding was also channelled to NGOs through the Department of Agriculture's Livelihood Enhancement for Agricultural Development programme.

Following his victory in the May 1992 Presidential elections, Fidel Ramos had even greater cause than Aquino to seek a strategic alliance with NGOs. NGOs were a more important political force in 1992 than in 1986. With only 23% of the vote in a seven-way Presidential election, Ramos had a narrower popular mandate than Aquino while his Lakas ng EDSA-National Union of Christian Democrats (Lakas-NUCD) lacked a majority in Congress. To create a more popular mandate, Ramos sought a social coalition around a pro-reform, pro-growth economic programme. Devised by National Security Adviser Gen. Jose Almonte, "Philippines 2000" aimed to achieve official status as a Newly Industrializing Country (NIC) by the year 2000. In January 1993, during the programme's formal launch, Ramos set out its main objectives:

> During my watch of the Presidency, I want to see our per capita income rise to at least US$1000, our economy to grow by at least 6-8% [per annum] and our incidence of poverty to decline to at least 30% from the present 50%. Guided by this vision, our Medium Term Development Plan for 1993-1998 has taken up the twin themes of 'global excellence' and 'people empowerment'.[Strengthening the] Export-orientation of the economy [will]

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid, pp. 189 & 236-237.

> enlarge the pie. Peoples empowerment [will] both enlarge the pie and distribute it more equitably.[67]

To achieve these objectives, Ramos noted, "...we must bring down the old economic order" by eroding the positions of firms that are "too soft, too inefficient, too self-satisfied to compete in the world"; by dismantling cartels and monopolies; by eradicating corruption in state agencies; and by upgrading the quality of the country's infrastructure.[68] To this end, Ramos went on, the government needed "to forge a strategic alliance" with business, labour and NGOs/POs.[69]

The basis for this strategic alliance was set out in the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan 1993-1998 (MTPDP 1993-1998), approved by the cabinet in December 1992. As with the 1987-1992 MTPDP, the plan provided the private sector with the leading role in promoting socio-economic development but it also aimed to reduce the size of the government sector wherever possible, a significant commitment since the state sector was already relatively smaller than those of its South-East Asian neighbours.[70] The plan argued that collaboration between state agencies, local government units and NGOs was crucial in attaining government targets in a number of areas, including sustainable agricultural development, redistributive agrarian reform, social services and community development, housing, training, and to the more general tasks of human resource development and nation-building.

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[67] Fidel V. Ramos, "Philippines 2000: Our Development Strategy", speech delivered before the First MultiSectoral Forum on Science and Technology, Manila Midtown Hotel, 21 January 1993, published by the MultiSectoral Reform Secretariat, Manila, 1993.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Expenditure by the state sector in 1991 was equivalent to 8.1% of Gross National Product, compared to 9.8% in Indonesia, 9.9% in Thailand, 10.9% in Singapore and 14.7% in Malaysia. See **Key Indicators of Developing Asian and Pacific Countries 1992**, Asian Development Bank and Oxford University Press, 1992, pg. 23.

Yet, by the time "Philippines 2000" was launched, scope for a reform-oriented strategic alliance between NGOs and the executive in opposition to Congress had narrowed. In 1991, Congress approved a bill establishing a Countryside Development Fund (CDF), enabling Senators and members of the House of Representatives to fund development initiatives in their constituencies directly.[71] By 1993, the scheme was worth P2.952bn.[72] (US$105m) and allocated P12.5m to each Representative, P18m to each Senator, and P20m to the Vice-President. CDF funding can be used to part-finance the local programmes of government departments, giving politicians a significant influence over spending priorities, but a high percentage is also channelled to NGOs and POs. Although under the control of the Department of Budget and Management, the CDF represents pork-barrel politics in its purest sense and enables politicians to reward NGOs and POs that provide electoral and other forms of support. Dwarfing the President's own CDF, the Presidential Social Fund, it represents a powerful weapon with which to oppose a strategic alliance between the executive and NGOs. In October 1993, the new Congress (like the 1987 Congress, dominated by the agrarian elite[73]) approved the 1994 budget, and a CDF worth P2.97 bn., half the estimated total value of "pork barrel" measures.[74] Yet, few development NGOs with a "progressive" or left-wing orientation made arrangements to avail of CDF funding, and Congressmen

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[71] The CDF was based on the Mindanao Development Fund, established by Congress in 1988.

[72] **The Appropriations Act for the Fiscal Year 1993,** (Republic Act 7645), Section XXXVIII.

[73] Of the 199 Congressmen/women elected in May 1992, 132 have interests in land and agriculture, 17 in logging and 14 in mining. 145 are members of traditional political families or clans, compared to 164 in the 8th Congress (1987-1992). See Eric Guiterrez, **Ties That Bind: a guide to the family, business and other interests in the ninth Congress,** Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism, Manila, 1994, pp. 4-5.

[74] "House Approves P6b pork barrel", **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 15 October 1993.

experienced problems in using CDF funds to support them.[75] The CDF therefore seems destined to stimulate the further proliferation of "elite", patronage-based, and business-oriented NGOs.

The CDF illustrates a more general problem undermining a strategic alliance between the executive and NGOs. Philippine politics, and Congressional politics in particular, remain dominated by patronage concerns. The ruling party automatically attracts new affiliates from other parties since many Senators or Representatives cannot afford to forego government patronage by opposing the ruling administration. Congressional support for Ramos was consolidated rapidly in the months following his election. Table 3 shows that by February 1993, the pro-Ramos coalition, Lakas-NÚCD, had 77 seats in the House. With LDP support in a "Rainbow Coalition", Ramos had an absolute majority in the 200-seat House. Yet, by then 51 members had still to decide their party affiliation, leaving further scope for the ruling coalition to increase its support through the magnetic appeal of its patronage. The Rainbow Coalition had an even greater majority in the Senate, controlling 18 of 24 seats. In effect therefore, the only party-based opposition to Ramos came from the Nationalist Peoples Coalition (NPC) led by defeated Presidential candidate Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco. In reality therefore, to maintain support in Congress, Ramos has little scope to undermine the power of traditional socio-economic elites, or implement "Philippines 2000", even in strategic

[75] One member of the House of Representatives, Bonifacio Gillego, wanted to channel 80% of his CDF to NGO/PO livelihood projects but found that most NGOs were unable to provide the necessary counterpart funding. To secure CDF funding of P250,000, for instance, an NGO or PO would have to raise P50,000 from its own resources, and take out a loan from the Landbank of P750,000, to be repaid at a commercial interest rate (18% at the time). As a result, for the 1992 Fiscal Year, he had only channelled P3m through development NGOs/POs. Gillego notes the enormous power the CDF gives Congressmen. In towns where mayors are supportive of the Congressman, CDF funding can be coursed through government offices while in towns where the mayor is unsupportive, CDF funds can be channelled to civic organisations that oppose the mayor and fund projects for which the Congressman can claim credit (interview with author, Manila, 28 April 1993).

alliance with NGOs.

Table 3.
Party Strength in the Senate and House

Party	Senate	House
Lakas-NUCD	2	77
LDP (including PDP-Laban and the Nacionalista Party)	16	31
Liberal Party	1	12
NPC (including KBL)	5	27
Other	0	51
Unaccounted	0	2
Total	24	200

Source: Senate; "Outcome of Philippine Elections 1992", Philippine Resource Centre, London, June 1992.
House of Representatives; **The Manila Bulletin** magazine, 28 February 1993.

Despite these constraints, Ramos took a number of concrete steps to establish both institutional and informal links with NGOs in his first 18 months in office. One was the appointment of three NGO leaders to cabinet positions: Ernesto Garilao, Executive Director of Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) as Secretary for Agrarian Reform; Dr. Angel Alcala, an environmental NGO activist, as Secretary for Environment and Natural Resources; and Dr. Juan Flavier, former President of PRRM and its sister organisation, the International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) as Secretary for Health. In addition, Salvador Enriquez was reappointed as Secretary for Budget and Management. Another measure involved frequent trips to the provinces, during which Ramos, accompanied by television cameras and journalists, visited local NGOs and POs.[76]

[76] For his birthday on 18 March 1993, for instance, Ramos paid a high-profile visit to Basco, Batanes. The busy day was taken up largely with meeting local NGO/POs.

Ramos also established an institutional basis for relating to the NGO community. Aquino's *Kabisig*, although smaller than originally intended, was still in existence, due largely to support from the conservative, USAID-funded, Philippine Institution of NGOs (PINOI). As a result, the movement was retained and given the more limited task of coordinating the government's "moral recovery" programme. Another Kabisig-style initiative was attempted however, when Ramos, helped by the Bishops-Businessmens Conference, launched a "Social Pact" with the support of 60 conservative NGOs and POs on 17 March 1993. In July 1992, Ramos established the Presidential Council for Countryside Development (PCCD) to link government agencies, NGOs and POs and the private sector in promoting rural development.[77] The same year, the government established the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) with the cooperation of environmental NGO coalitions, partly in response to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. NGOs were also involved in drafting the MTPDP 1993-1998. The Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) launched in 1989, had a membership of 3,500 primary NGOs by July 1989, providing the government with a central body with which to coordinate. CODE-NGO was invited to sit both on the NEDA steering committee that drafted the plan, and the Legislative-Executive Development Council where it hoped to follow through on the MTPDP.[78]

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[77] By January 1993, five NGOs had received contracts worth P8m in total from the PCCD to assist the PCCD devise strategy, financed by USAID through the Coordinating Council for the Philippine Assistance Program and the Development Bank of the Philippines ("Background on the PCCD", Presidential Council on Countryside Development, Manila, n.d. [1994]).

[78] CODE-NGO were unhappy with the final draft of the MDPDP. NEDA made a number of concessions but only, CODE-NGO felt, on "motherhood issues", generalised and unsubstantive policy commitments such as people empowerment. At an Economic Summit held at the Philippine International Convention Centre in September 1992 organised by the Presidential Management Staff (PMS), NGOs and POs were invited to prepare a "peoples contribution" to the "Philippines 2000" plan. NGOs contributed detailed suggestions, but none

During a speech to Kabisig's 2nd National Assembly in July 1993, Ramos spoke of his commitment to fostering partnership between national government, local government units, and NGOs and POs, and cited models of the partnership he hoped to achieve (the National Solidarity Program in Mexico and the *Saemaul Undong* in South Korea).[79] Ramos also noted however that the Department of Interior and Local Government (rather than NEDA) and the Presidential Management Staff has been ordered to screen NGOs and "maintain their integrity",[80] sending a clear signal to development NGOs that feared government attempts at cooptation.[81]

4. NGOs and the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

To a significant extent, state-NGO collaboration is undermined by the influence of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). During the Aquino administration's first year, military influence over state-NGO policy was minimal. The AFP of the Marcos days was reorganizing itself, armed conflict in the countryside had abated as insurgent groups assessed the new government, and peace talks were imminent. By 1988 however, government-NDF peace talks had collapsed, the armed strength of the NPA was at a peak,[82] and government forces were committed to an aggressive counter-insurgency policy that included the use of

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of these were included in the final minutes of the Summit produced by the PMS, exacerbating CODE-NGOs suspicions (Marie Laisaso, Program Officer, CODE-NGO, interview with author, Manila, 8 November 1993.)

[79] "Ramos vows Kabisig will be above politics", **The Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 10 July 1993.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Significantly, CODE-NGO, which has avoided Kabisig since its inception, had no representative at the Kabisig Assembly.

[82] The military estimated NPA strength in early 1989 at 24,000 regular guerillas with 10,000 high-powered rifles, with control or influence over 8,000 of the country's 41,000 barangays. See Gregg R. Jones, **Red Revolution: Inside the Philippine Guerilla Movement**, Westview Press, Boulder, 1989, pg. 8. In probability however, these figures were slightly higher in mid-to-late 1988.

Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Units (CAFGUs).[83] Social activists, especially NGO workers and human rights lawyers, became significant targets because of their high visibility, especially in campaigns for local elections held in January 1988, and because of a crackdown against NGOs and cause-oriented groups perceived as sympathetic to the NDF-CPP-NPA. Nationally and in parts of the country where it was the only significant cause-oriented NGO, such as Masbate, TFDP was singled out.[84] To intimidate staff at its headquarters in Manila, the bodies of two dead men were left outside its offices in April 1988.[85] Other human rights activists were also killed,[86] including three human rights lawyers killed in as many weeks.[87] Others were arrested and tortured. On 28 November, for instance, 2 human rights NGO workers were arrested and tortured in Baguio, enduring electric shock, water cure, and

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[83] CAFGUs replaced the hated Civilian Home Defence Forces (CHDFs).

[84] Minutes of the TFDP National Board Meeting, 9-11 May 1988. The minutes note than on the island of Masbate, the local BAYAN network had been forced to dissolve because of intense harassment, leaving TFDP as the only significant cause-oriented group.

[85] **Malaya**, 26 April 1988.

[86] For example: Armando Angueles, killed just before 1988, on 11 December 1987 in Negros Occidental. Angueles, a member of Tanggol Karapatan Concerned Citizens for Justice and Peace, was shot by vigilantes of the anti-communist Alsa Masa (Masses Arise) while campaigning for the Liberal Party (**The Manila Chronicle** 7 January 1988). On 30 January 1988, human rights advocate and freelance journalist, Andres Rio, was tortured and killed in Leyte, reportedly by elements of the 43rd Infantry Battalion, while campaigning on behalf of a local PDP-Laban candidate (TFDP Press Release, 8 February 1988).

[87] Ramon Cura, killed in Angeles City on 18 June; Alfonso Surigao of FLAG and the Protestant Lawyers League of the Philippines (PLLP), killed in Cebu, 24 June; Emmanuel Mendoza, killed in Manila on 2 July. FLAG and PLLP lawyers were targeted over a three year period (1987-1989) and others killed within that period were David Bueno, chairperson of the Ilocos Norte-Laoag City Human Rights Organisation and a member of the PLLP, shot dead on 22 October 1987, Vicente Mirabueno, a FLAG lawyer, shot dead in General Santos City on 6 February 1988, and Oscar Tonog, also a FLAG lawyer, killed 21 March 1989. A former FLAG lawyer and government prosecutor, Gil Getes, was shot dead on 14 March 1990 in Agusan del Sur. See **Impunity: Prosecutions of Human Rights Violations in the Philippines**, Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, New York, September 1991, Chapter 9.

cigarette burning.[88]

Repression continued through 1989, and according to Amnesty international, "dozens of activists involved in lawful non-government organisations which military authorities and some government officials described as fronts for the CPP/NPA 'disappeared'", a significant portion of the estimated 200 victims of extra-judicial killings during the year.[89] Overall, during 1988 and 1989, NGOs and cause-oriented groups experienced repression of an intensity unknown under the Marcos regime.[90] By 1990, the violence had lessened, but one of the greatest atrocities against a single NGO occurred when three workers from the International Institute for Rural Reconstruction were murdered in Negros Occidental by cultists armed by the AFP as anti-communist vigilantes.[91]

Left-of-centre NGOs also faced a new threat from formal links between the AFP and right-wing civic organisations. In April 1989, the AFP established Special CAFGU Active Auxiliaries (SCAAs), funded by private businesses and organisations. In Negros, where the

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[88] Susan Aniban of TFDP and Garry Lim of the Northern Luzon Human Rights Organisation were arrested on 28 November 1988 while visiting political detainees at Baguio City Jail, and released on 30 November. Aniban was blindfolded during her torture and moved between different locations. On 29 November, two TFDP workers, Wilbert Umalco and Eva Faculo who went to the jail to look for Aniban and Lim were themselves arrested, along with lawyer Joseph Humiding who accompanied them, to be released later the same day (TFDP Press Release, 1 December 1988).

[89] "The Philippines: A Summary of Amnesty International's Concerns", ASA 35/02/90, Amnesty International, London, May 1990, pp. 3 & 5.

[90] TFDP statistics, for instance, record 90 involuntary disappearances ("salvagings") between January and September 1988. Of these, 19 are listed as NGO workers or members of student or farmer organisations. This figure probably underestimates the number with affiliations to cause-oriented groups due to omissions in reports from TFDP's unit and regional offices. ("List of Involuntary Disappearances 1 January to 30 September 1988", TFDP archives).

[91] The three, Wilfrido Villaruz, Ernesto Biasong and Ladislao Pillones, worked on IIRR's Family Food Production programme, funded by the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and were abducted on 11 August 1990 by six members of the Greenan fanatic cult. All three were active in a Basic Christian Community (the assumed reason for their abduction) and Villaruz was chairman of the Sipalay branch of BAYAN.

counter-insurgency campaign was especially intense, the Sugar Development Foundation, an NGO established by the Confederation of Sugar Planters Associations, funded the training of over 1400 SCAA members and allocated over 75% of its revenues to the military's counterinsurgency campaign.[92] By 1991 however, tensions between NGOs and the AFP had abated slightly, and the AFP signed a memorandum of agreement with CODE-NGO, governing security for NGO workers. The agreement remained inoperable however, largely because the Department of Interior and Local Government wanted it approved by local Peace and Order Councils, while CODE-NGO wanted a national-level agreement.[93]

Following the election of President Ramos, the level of violence directed against NGO workers increased again, and at least two NGO workers were killed in the first 18 months: Chris Batan of TFDP, killed by CAFGU para-militaries in February 1993; and William Rom, head of SILDAP-Sidlakan, an NGO working with tribal communities in Surigao, killed by para-militaries in July 1993. While the level of insurgency declined considerably after 1989, NGOs remained wary of violence from the armed forces because of continued indiscipline within the AFP, the government's unwillingness to disband the CAFGUs, the presence in elective office of ex-military officers previously involved in the harassment of NGOs, and the continued existence of private armies.

The other significant aspect of AFP policy that affects the NGO community is the cooptation of NGOs in support of the military's counter-insurgency campaign. The strategy is implemented through a number of mechanisms in addition to the Presidential Social Fund.

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[92] See G. Sidney Silliman, "Human Rights and the Transition to Democracy", in James F. Eder and Robert L. Youngblood (Eds.), **Patterns of Power and Politics in the Philippines: Implications for Development**, Arizona State University, Tempe, 1994, pg. 129.

[93] Annie Calma, CODE-NGO Program Officer, interview with author, Manila, 8 November 1993.

The first and most important is the National Reconciliation and Development Program (NRDP), created by Executive Order 103 of 24 December 1986. The NRDP, worth P220m (US$8m) in the 1993 fiscal year,[94] includes a National Reconciliation and Development Council which works through Kabisig, the Cooperatives Development Authority, and the Philippine Institution of NGOs (PINOI).[95] Another is the Rebel Returnee Livelihood Assistance Financing Program, in which NGOs are used as conduits for lending to rebel returnees.[96]

One important figure pioneering strategy on the use of civic organisations in counter-insurgency is Lt. Col. Victor Corpus. Corpus achieved fame in the 1970s when he defected to the New Peoples Army and served 6 years as an NPA commander before being captured and jailed. Released with other political prisoners in March 1986, Corpus rejoined the AFP. In a book on counter-insurgency which became a best-seller in the Philippines in 1989, Corpus argued that

> The AFP and the civil government will exert all efforts to mobilize the strategic sectors of society (the working class, the peasantry, the teachers, the students, the business sector, the professionals, the clergy, the women and the media) into a broad United Front for a 'Peoples War For Democracy'. As peoples' power was used to bring down the Marcos dictatorship, peoples' power will again be utilized to bring down the communist threat of another totalitarian dictatorship.[97]

To this end, military officers are actively involved in a number of prominent NGOs. Some

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[94] **The Appropriations Act for the Fiscal Year 1993**, (Republic Act 7645), Section XLVI.

[95] Owen Masaganda, "National reconciliation program gains headway", **The Manila Bulletin**, 7 April 1993.

[96] In 1987, for instance, the Rebel Returnee Livelihood Assistance Program was worth P30m. (**1987 Philippine Development Report**, National Economic and Development Authority, Manila, 1988, pg. 55).

[97] Victor Corpus, **Silent War**, VNC Enterprises, Manila, 1989, pg. 141.

foreign funders are prepared to support military attempts to establish civic organisations[98], and soldiers are permitted to establish their own NGOs by AFP regulations. Corpus, for instance, as Operations Officer of the 3rd Infantry Division, based in Capiz on the island of Panay, implements his ideas through Barangay Communal Forest Cooperatives Inc. (BCFC), an NGO which he heads. BCFC organises farmers' cooperatives in 25 *barangays* (villages) located on a 33,000 hectare military reservation,[99] and is funded by the NRDP and the Countryside Development Fund of Senator Rodolfo Biazon, a former AFP General.

AFP responsibility for counter-insurgency, and the associated use of NGOs, made leaders of centre-left and left-wing NGOs wary of establishing concrete ties with government departments or with the executive itself. With the decline in encounters between the AFP and the NPA, responsibility for counter-insurgency policy was to have been transferred from the AFP to the Philippine National Police,[100] and moved from the control of the Department of National Defense to the Department of Interior and Local Government at the end of 1993. Postponed however, the transfer was finally completed in late 1994. But with renewed insurgency in 1993 and the continuing failure of peace initiatives, NGOs suspect that insurgency will endure and that the AFP will retain significant influence over counter-insurgency policy in areas where insurgency endures.

5. NGOs and the Bureaucracy.

Despite the largely unsubstantive and rhetorical commitment from the executive to the creation of institutional ties with NGOs, and the atmosphere of mutual suspicion and mistrust

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[98] The Hanns Seidel Foundation, for instance, has paid for senior AFP officers to study cooperative building (**The Manila Bulletin**, 13 August 1993.)

[99] Owen Masaganda, "Ex-rebels grow trees for a living in Panay", **The Manila Bulletin**, 8 April 1993.

[100] The former Philippine Constabulary which in 1992 separated from the AFP.

promoted by the AFP, individual government departments have developed close ties with the NGO community. In 1986, the Presidential Commission on Government Reorganisation launched the most far-reaching reform of the bureaucracy ever undertaken. The reform programme sought to remove civil servants who had loyally supported the Marcos dictatorship, and tens of thousands were dismissed, largely indiscriminately. But the reorganisation also promoted privatization, decentralization, and community self-reliance, and as its powers and functions were whittled away, the bureaucracy established new relationships with local government units, the private sector, and the NGO/PO community.[101] Often the process was antagonistic as Marcos technocrats battled to preserve their powers while new reformers actively sought out new partnerships to democratise the process of socio-economic development.

In many cases, the establishment of NGO desks represented a tokenistic commitment to democratization and popular empowerment, but in others, links with NGOs represent an attempt to overcome strategic restraints on state capacity. A case in point is the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA). During the Marcos dictatorship, the purchase and supply of key agricultural commodities and production credit were nationalized by the government with individual sectors controlled by Marcos cronies who used the monopoly privileges to enrich themselves. One notorious crony, Eduardo Cojuangco, became one of the Philippines' wealthiest men with the proceeds of a levy on coconut production collected by the PCA. During the Aquino years, a battle waged for control of an estimated P70bn. in PCA funds frozen after the fall of Marcos as the Department of Finance sought their return to the national treasury and the PCA aimed to retain them. When Fidel Ramos became President,

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[101] Ledivinia V. Carino, **Bureaucracy for Democracy: The Dynamics of Executive-Bureaucracy Interaction During Governmental Transitions**, University of the Philippines College of Public Administration et al, Manila, 1992, pp. 127-141.

the PCA funds were worth an estimated P140bn. (US$5bn.), and a special committee was established under the Office of the President to determine their future.[102] In his Presidential campaign, in which Cojuangco also ran, Ramos promised to return the money to farmers and following his election he appointed General Virgilio David to head the PCA. David, PCA Chairman 1974-1977, was a noted critic of corruption within the organisation, and his appointment suggested government willingness to confront Cojuangco. Cojuangco's National Peoples Coalition (NPC) however controlled 5 Senate and 27 House seats, a significant base from which to oppose attempts in Congress to pass a bill declaring the funds public and available for distribution to farmers.[103]

In 1993, the PCA concluded an agreement with *Katipunan ng Maliit Magnuniyag sa Pilipinas*, (KAMMPIL, Alliance of Filipino Small Coconut Farmers), to channel P12m (US$0.5m) of PCA funds to local KAMMPIL affiliates in Mindanao, Leyte, Laguna and Quezon. The project was negotiated with the help of the NGO/PO coalition, Convergence for Integrated Community-Based Area Development (CONVERGENCE), and aimed to organise small coconut farmers at the barangay level prior to the return of the coconut levy and break the captive vote which they have long represented for Cojuangco candidates.[104] Although tiny in proportion to the estimated value of PCA funds, the project is intended as a starting point for further collaboration between NGOs and the PCA. Yet the project also illustrates a dilemma for NGOs attempting the interpret the government's strategy.[105] PCA-NGO-PO

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[102] Bernardo V. Lopez, "Coveting the coco funds", **The Manila Chronicle**, 16 August 1993.

[103] NPC Senators, led by Nikki Coseteng, were instead intent on securing a bill that abolished the PCA and therefore paved the way for the private recovery of PCA funds.

[104] The NPC was reputedly the biggest spending party in the 1992 elections and Cojuangco remains a substantial force in the coconut industry.

[105] Amee Coronel, Deputy Executive Director, CONVERGENCE, interview with author, Manila, 16 August 1993.

collaboration may undermine the patronage-based dependency of small coconut farmers yet many NGOs suspect that securing the personal and immediate position of President Ramos, by undermining the power-base of one of his main opponents, rather than structural change, is the ultimate objective of government policy.

6. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

In July 1990, 1,700 people were killed when a mud-slide engulfed the town of Ormoc in Leyte. Caused by heavy rain, and a dam bursting on the mountain-side that overhung the town, the disaster was blamed on illegal logging that denuded the mountain, exposing the top-soil to the ravages of the rainy season. The disaster highlighted a greater problem: under a rate of deforestation of 200,000 hectares a year from 1950 to 1960, (down to 100,000 hectares a year by 1989), total forest cover in the Philippines fell to 23% by 1993.[106] The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, noted for corruption and ties to illegal loggers, seemed poorly placed to respond. In March 1987 however, Aquino appointed former human rights lawyer Fulgencio Factoran as Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources and during his five year tenure, the department developed some of the closest and most extensive ties with NGOs and POs.[107] Under Factoran's leadership, and with the recruitment of Delfin Ganapin, head of the Philippine Federation for Environmental Concerns, as Department Under-Secretary, more than US$1bn. was lent to the Philippine government for environmental projects involving NGOs between 1986 and 1992,[108] boosting

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[106] Marites Danguilan Vitug, **Power From The Forest: The Politics of Logging**, Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism, Manila, 1993, pp. 66-67.

[107] Florencio Abad might have forged even greater ties between the DAR and NGOs, given time, but served three months in office before his appointment was vetoed by Congress.

[108] Yasmin Arquiza, "Funding Agencies shape RP agenda", **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 2 November 1993.

the DENR's budget from P1.08bn. in 1986 to P4.5bn. in 1990.[109] One of the biggest ODA-funded projects was the Contract Reforestation Programme (CPR), financed by a $120m loan from the Asian Development Bank and $120m from the Japanese Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund[110] but others included a Natural Resources Management Program, funded by a $125m loan from USAID, a US$2m Debt-for-Nature Swap funded by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and the Integrated Protected Area System (IPAS) programme, funded by the World Bank.

With the strengthening of capacity that resulted from the ODA receipts, the collaboration with NGOs, and a decentralization programme that saw 85% of the DENR's 24,000 personnel assigned to regional offices, the department achieved some notable successes. Reforestation rates had risen slightly in 1986 and 1987, but between 1988 and 1991, they leapt to an annual rate ranging from 80,000 to 88,000 hectares. The DENR also succeeded in imposing an environmental fee on loggers in 1990, and from 143 in 1987, Timber Licensing Agreements issued by the department on an annual basis fell to 32 by June 1992. Between 1987 and 1992, 443 cases were taken against DENR employees suspected of corruption, sending a strong signal about the anti-corruption drive.[111]

Links established during the Aquino years have been consolidated under Ramos. In August 1992, Dr. Angel Alcala, an environmental scientist and board member of Haribon Foundation, was appointed Secretary of the DENR, after Ramos's other choices met with the disapproval of environmental NGOs, and after Alcala's name was recommended by NGOs

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[109] Vitug, **Power From The Forest...**, pg. 58.

[110] See **Community Participation, NGO Involvement and Land Tenure Issues in the Philippine Reforestation Program: An Assessment of the ADB-funded Contract Reforestation Program in the Philippines**, Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC), Manila, 1991.

[111] Vitug, **Power From The Forest...**, pp. 48-49 & 59-61.

including Haribon[112]. Delfin Ganapin remained as departmental Under-Secretary, giving NGO activists the top two positions in the DENR. Ramos also established the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development, again in response to pressure from environmental NGOs.[113] By 1993, as a result of this collaboration, the DENR had developed significant expertise in managing debt-for-nature swaps, and during a visit to the United States in November 1993, President sought further swaps to reduce the country's US$33bn. dollar foreign debt, which required 14% of the national budget to service.[114]

The DENR however also encountered significant problems in its dealings with NGOs. First, with the significant infusion of ODA funding, commercial enterprises masqueraded as NGOs to avail of DENR contracts. Many were established or secured contracts with the connivance of local DENR officials,[115] while others overcharged for elaborate expenses such as aircraft hire, and corruption remained at a high level.[116] Second, the DENR was unable to find sufficient community-based NGOs with forestry management skills to implement its US$1.65m USAID-funded Community Forestry Programme (CFP). Many contracts for the CFP and the ADB-funded Contract Reforestation Programme were issued

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[112] Ibid, pg. 173.

[113] Ibid, pp. 192-193.

[114] Booma Cruz, "Ramos to push for debt-for-nature plan", **The Manila Chronicle**, 15 November 1993.

[115] Dante Aquino, "The Remaining Philippine Forests: Problems and Solutions", paper presented to the Second European Conference on Philippine Studies, SOAS, University of London, 13-15 April 1994.

[116] The DENR estimated that corruption ate up 15% (P390m, or US$14m) of the funds spent on the reforestation programme while the Commission on Audit estimated that between 1989 and 1990, 90 contractors who received initial fees of P26m (US$1m) failed to reforest a single hectare (Vitug, **Power From The Forest...**, pp. 60-61). The national coordinator of the DENR's Community Forestry Program acknowledged that many of the NGOs involved as contractors "are hiding behind the cloak of community development when their main target is forest products extraction" (quoted in ibid, pp. 159-160).

to community-based NGOs that lacked the necessary experience.[117] Third, many NGOs involved in DENR contracts, especially those involved in monitoring illegal logging, endured harassment and violence which undermined their role.[118] Fourth, despite DENR-NGO collaboration, links between illegal loggers, local government officials, the military and national politicians undermined attempts to reduce illegal logging.[119] Fifth, many of the environmental NGOs argued over access to millions of dollars of foreign funding. Factoran incurred the wrath of many environmental NGOs and a bitter dispute raged among members of the PCSD over Stage II of the Integrated Protected Areas System project, threatening to halt its implementation by late 1993.

Overall, the DENR maintains a constructive relationship with NGOs, a relationship which is still at an early stage, and which has yet to be fully tested. Yet already, a key characteristic of the way in which state agencies relate to NGOs has become apparent. Studies of NGO-state relations emphasise the importance of direct personal and informal

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[117] Vitug, **Power From The Forest...**, pp. 160-161. The ADB, while happy overall with the DENR's implementation of the Contract Reforestation Programme, did have reservations about the managerial abilities of many of the NGOs that worked on it (Dieter Bucher, Senior Policy Adviser, Social Dimensions Unit, Asian Development Bank, interview with author, Manila, 20 May 1993).

[118] For instance, one staff member of the Southern Luzon Jurisdictional Conference (SLJP) was severely beaten by a local government official found illegally hoarding 10,000 board feet of timber in July 1993. The SLJP was a contractor to the DENR under the US$40m Low Income Upland Communities Project on the island of Mindoro, financed by a US$32m soft loan from the ADB and US$8m from the national government (**The Manila Bulletin**, 10 July 1993). See also Robin Broad with John Cavanagh, **Plundering Paradise: The Struggle for the Environment in the Philippines**, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1993, pp. 108-116.

[119] For instance, the DENR's 1993 "Operation Jericho" aimed at reducing illegal logging in Cagayan Valley, one of the provinces most affected was a "total flop" because many of the officials involved in its implementation were in cahoots with the loggers (**Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 30 October 1993).

relationships.[120] Yet, although Alcala enjoys the support of most environmental NGOs, his close association with one particular NGO, Haribon, suggests a relationship that is personalistic.[121] State-NGO relationships which aim to undermine the patronage-based nature of Philippine politics, are, in some respects, succumbing to the very problem that they seek to cure.

7. The Department of Agrarian Reform.

The Philippines has one of the most inequitable structures of land ownership in the developing world: roughly 5% of families own 83% of all farmland while 85% of the 10m people directly employed in agriculture are landless in the sense of having no secure title.[122] Given a population density of 202.3 per square kilometre, twice the South-East Asian average[123], land resources are under enormous pressure, and rural poverty is significantly

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[120] For instance, John Farrington and Anthony Bebbington (Eds), **Reluctant Partners: Non-Governmental Organisations, the State and Sustainable Agricultural Development**, Routledge, London, 1993, pg. 190; or Somthavil Klinmahorn and Kevin Ireland, "NGO-Government Collaboration in Bangkok" in Michael Edwards and David Hulme (Eds.), **Making a Difference: NGOs and Development in a Changing World**, Earthscan, London, 1992, pg. 61.

[121] Since becoming Secretary, Alcala has worked closely with Haribon (Vitug, **Power From the Forest...**, pg. 177). In one case at least however this has led to concern. Maximo Kalaw, Haribon's influential head, the main figure in the environmental NGO coalition, Green Forum, and a PCSD member, was a noted critic of Factoran. Kalaw was especially critical of the DENR's decision to award a contract under the second stage of the World Bank-funded Integrated Protected Areas System project, worth P500m or US$18m, to PRRM. In 1993, Alcala wrote to the World Bank to say that the DENR was reconsidering its contract with PRRM, and was instead considering awarding the contract to a consortium of NGOs in which Haribon, and Maximo Kalaw, would play a leading role (Arquiza, "Funding agencies...").

[122] Putzel, **A Captive Land...**, pp. 23 & 27.

[123] 1990 figure. Harvey Demaine, "The Philippines: Physical and Social Geography", in **The Far East And Australasia**, Europa Publications, London, 1994, pg. 837.

greater than in urban areas.[124] A close relationship has long existed between land ownership and political power. A similar relationship exists between land ownership and wealth distribution, and the Philippines has the second highest level of wealth inequality in South-East Asia.[125] Redistributive land reform is therefore a crucial component in a programme of structural reform and collaboration between state agencies and NGOs in implementing a land reform programme constitutes a "strategic alliance" in its most fundamental sense.

The Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), or rather a strong element of reform-oriented officials within it, had long sought a strategic alliance with NGOs. In August 1986, a UN inter-agency mission visited the Philippines at the invitation of the DAR to seek opportunities to implement the Principles and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development agreed in Rome in 1979. As a result of the mission, the DAR, with funding from the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and in collaboration with the Asian NGO Coalition of Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) and PhilDHRRA, organised a series of regional consultations on land reform in 1987/88, following the establishment of the Congress for a Peoples Agrarian Reform (CPAR).[126] In May 1987, a Cabinet Action Committee tabled proposals for significant NGO participation in a liberal reform programme. According to Putzel, the proposals

> spelled out in detail the powers of the DAR ... to acquire land, to determine the application of the right of retention by landowners and the 'compensability' of their claims, and to preside over virtually every aspect of the reform. The DAR's decision would be binding and the only appeal would be to the Office of the President. This idea was based on the principle that a DAR transformed

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[124] Between 1977 and 1989, those living in absolute poverty constituted 63% of the population in rural areas, compared to 48% in urban areas (**Human Development Report 1993**, pg. 170).

[125] For wealth inequality, the Philippines has a Gini co-efficient of 0.45, compared to 0.47 in Thailand (ibid), although for land inequality, the Gini co-efficient, at 0.647, is more severe (Putzel, **A Captive Land...**, pg.30).

[126] **Cooperation with NGOs...**, Asian Development Bank, Volume 1, pg. 303.

> and working with peasant organisations, NGOs and a strong network of 'Barangay People's Councils' would be free from interference by the political networks behind elected members of government and the courts which were known to be dominated by powerful local interests.[127]

The proposals were defeated however by conservative forces within the cabinet, notably Executive Secretary Joker Arroyo, Defence Secretary Rafael Ileto and Finance Secretary Jaime Ongpin,[128] and a more conservative programme, signed into law by Aquino as Executive Order No. 229, became the basis for a Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Programme (CARP) eventually approved by Congress in 1988. Following its enactment into law, CARP was implemented at a ponderous pace: between 1987 and 1990, Putzel notes, "only 9,949 hectares of privately held lands, or 4.6% of the ...target, were distributed".[129] The failure arose in significant part because, Putzel continues, "there was virtually no tradition of state action independent of the powerful political clans in society upon which the Aquino government could draw",[130] and because the state-NGO alliance that could have created such a tradition, "was ruled out by those who defended the conservative approach".[131]

Land reform was largely ignored as an issue in Fidel Ramos's presidential campaign,

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[127] Putzel, **A Captive Land...**, pp. 248-249.

[128] Ibid, pp. 226-227.

[129] Ibid, pg. 358.

[130] Ibid, pg. 249.

[131] Ibid, pg. 361. A concrete example was Congressional Committee on Appointments' veto of the appointment of Florencio Abad as Secretary for Agrarian Reform in 1990. During his brief three month tenure, Abad attempted to mobilise NGOs as a pro-agrarian reform lobby. He encouraged the formation of the Peasants Forum, a coalition that (briefly) united three main peasant alliances, the Congress for a Peoples Agrarian Reform (CPAR), the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) and SANDUGUAN. Abad also coordinated an informal cluster of cabinet members and government officials concerned with agrarian reform and rural development that met regularly with NGOs and farmer representatives. See Benjamin Tolosa, "What Difference Can Three Months Make?", **Philippine Politics and Society**, Vol. 1 No. 1, January 1992.

and since he took office, the implementation of CARP has continued to proceed very slowly.[132] One reason is cost; P221bn. or US$10.35bn. for the total ten-year programme. 63% of the budget, P139bn. or P13.9bn. per year should be spent on support services, yet for the 1993 fiscal year, the government allocated only P3.6bn.[133] Another reason is administrative capacity; in October 1993, NEDA admitted that with three quarters of the fiscal year already gone, only 30% of planned government expenditure of P126bn. had been spent, due partly to delays in the release of funds.[134]The work of the DAR has been significantly affected by this problem, and other forms of red tape. A third problem is a provision allowing for the redesignation of lands from agricultural to residential, industrial or commercial use five years after the enactment of CARP, leading to a rash of conversions which has reduced the land area devoted to agricultural production and available for redistribution. In the provinces surrounding Manila targeted by the government for rural industrial development, collectively known as CALABARZON, an estimated half a million farmers will be displaced by land conversions.[135] By September 1992 alone, 833 of 1209 conversion applications for the CALABARZON area had been approved.[136] Other regions targeted for industrial development such as Cebu or the Cagayan-Iligan corridor in Mindanao have also been affected. CARP is also being undermined by the government's decentralization programme. Section 20 of the 1991 Local Government Code transfers the power to reclassify

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[132] Garilao admits "we have a lot of catching up to do" and that further progress will be undermined by land conversions (see further below). He estimated that 350,000 hectares would be distributed in 1993 ("Garilao:'Land conversions have to be made'", **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 26 April 1993).

[133] **The Manila Bulletin**, 4 June 1993.

[134] **The Manila Bulletin**, 25 October 1993.

[135] Bernardo V. Lopez, "Farmers versus Industrialists", **The Manila Chronicle**, 12 April 1993, quoting an estimate from the Philippine Peasant Institute. CALABARZON is an acronym for the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon.

[136] Ibid.

lands from the DAR to local governments, opening new opportunities for land developers and speculators.

Working within the context of the government's overall lack of commitment to land reform, Agrarian Reform Secretary Ernesto Garilao is using NGOs to maximise the limited scope available: "without the active participation of the private sector, particularly the non-government organisations (NGOs)", Garilao argues, "the DAR cannot cope with the implementation of CARP".[137] On paper, government targets are impressive: between 1993 and 1998, the DAR plans to distribute 7.57m hectares of land, 2.75m hectares of it privately-owned, to 4.6m farmer-beneficiaries.[138] The DAR however plans to allocate 70% of the planned P103bn. expenditure between 1993 and 1998 to landlord compensation,[139] undermining its capacity to provide the support services to beneficiaries on which CARP's success may ultimately depend. NGOs, and the ODA funds which they have secured, will therefore be vital, since ODA donors are unwilling to fund the landlord compensation component of CARP.

One innovative strategy based on close collaboration between the DAR, NGOs and POs, involves the establishment of over 200 Agrarian Reform Communities (ARCs) around the country, using collective Certification of Land Ownership Awards (CLOAs). The ARC concept is based on the use of privately-owned land or estates foreclosed by banks when prices for commodities fell in the early 1980s, much of which had already been occupied by POs. In Negros Occidental, for instance, the Agrarian Reform Alliance of Democratic Organisations in Negros (ARADO) is working with the DAR to create an ARC near

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[137] "P3.6b for land reform", **The Manila Bulletin**, 4 June 1993.

[138] Manny Mogato, "Landowners to get shares for land", **The Manila Chronicle**, 10 June 1993.

[139] Ibid.

Himamaylan, 75km. from the provincial capital, Bacolod.[140] An alliance of 12 NGOs and 22 POs, including the militant National Federation of Sugar Workers, ARADO and its affiliates were responsible for the occupation of 65,000 hectares of idle or abandoned land in 1987, an amount that had dropped to 45,000 by 1990 and 30,000 by 1993 as POs were driven off by landlords reoccupying their foreclosed land and by military counter-insurgency operations. ARADO had long demanded action by the DAR to enforce individual CLOA's already awarded, but the local Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer only agreed to implement the Aquino government's Administrative Order No. 5[141] and cooperate with NGOs and POs, in March 1993. Of 93 cases taken by ARADO since 1987, involving more than 5000 hectares of land, only 31 have been resolved of which only 6 have resulted in CLOAs being issued. In a desperate attempt to speed up the implementation of CARP, ARADO is working with the DAR on additional ARC projects, a case of "critical collaboration" however rather than "strategic alliance".[142] Equally, ODA donors such as the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) that have yet to channel significant amounts to NGOs or POs have embraced the ARC concept enthusiastically, as have donors who were hesitant about supporting the redistributive, as distinct from the technical, aspects of CARP. In March 1993 for instance, President Ramos launched a project to establish an ARC in Jalajala, Rizal, based on collaboration between the DAR and two NGOs, funded by JICA.[143] In October 1993,

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[140] Ramon Consing, Para-legal Officer, Agrarian Reform Alliance of Democratic Organisations in Negros (ARADO), interview with author, Bacolod, 1 November 1993.

[141] AO No. 5, issued by Aquino in 1990, obliged the local and national offices of all government departments to coordinate with NGOs and POs.

[142] Consing, interview.

[143] Under the plan the two NGOs, the SEAMEO Regional Centre for Graduate Study in Agriculture (SEARCA) and the National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATTCO) will establish a number of institutions, including a federation that links all existing cooperatives in the area to manage rice milling, packaging and marketing operations ("Land reform community set up in Jalajala", **The Manila Chronicle**, 10 October 1993).

Ernesto Garilao secured a major boost for the ARC concept, signing a contract with the European Community for P1.2bn. (US$43m) in aid to finance the establishment of 254 ARCs after 1995.[144]

The DAR relies on NGOs and POs in other ways also. CARP has been badly affected by illegal land rezoning carried out with the connivance of local government officials, and NGOs have been instrumental in bringing "land scams" to light.[145] Hindered by insufficient staff numbers, an inability to reach all potential land reform beneficiaries, and intimidation of its staff by landlords, the DAR also relies on NGOs to organise farmers and identify land for redistribution and potential beneficiaries. In North Cotabato, for instance, PRRM has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the DAR to identify lands and potential beneficiaries, and works closely with the Municipal Agrarian Reform Officers (MAROs) in localities in which it is active, encouraging relationships between MAROs and local POs.

As with the DENR however, the personal relationships needed to ensure effective state-NGO collaboration often border on patronage. After becoming Agrarian Reform Secretary, Ernesto Garilao, a former Executive Director of PBSP, the largest NGO in the country, recruited Butch Olano of PhilDHRRA as DAR Under-Secretary for Operations. Other NGOs say however that Garilao and Olano have favoured PBSP and PhilDHRRA in the awarding of contracts, and that staff from these and other social democratic-oriented NGOs have been recruited to work in the DAR, especially in the Planning, and Management

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[144] Carlos Marquez, "P1.2b Europe aid to finance agrarian reform", **The Manila Chronicle**, 30 October 1993.

[145] In April 1993, for instance, President Ramos ordered an investigation by the DAR and Department of Interior and Local Government, after attempts to force 600 families from land near Trece Martires City, Cavite, were brought to light by a local NGO, Cavite Mission. The owner had wanted to convert an estimated 900 hectares spread over two sites into industrial estates ("Ramos: Probe Cavite Mess", **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 19 April 1993).

Services departments.[146] In addition, the DAR has experienced problems with NGOs abusing funds, and in October 1993, Garilao was forced to order a nationwide performance audit of NGOs awarded contracts under CARP following complaints from NGOs in Northern Mindanao about rampant abuse in the region.[147]

8. The Department of Health

Population growth in the Philippines averaged 2.7% between 1960 and 1991,[148] (although down to 2.4% in 1992), and represents a major impediment to raising living standards for the population as a whole. Both President Fidel Ramos and Health Secretary Juan Flavier are Protestants and determined to face-down the Catholic Church on family planning. To do so however, the DOH needs NGO support in implementing the Ramos government's Philippine Family Planing Program (PFPP), launched in 1993, which aims to cut population growth to under 2% by 1998.[149] With only 200 population control staff when Flavier took office, compared to a peak of 10,000 under the Marcos regime,[150] the DOH is therefore heavily reliant on NGO coalitions including the Philippine NGO Council on Population, Health and Welfare (PNGOC), the Family Planning Organisation of the Philippines (FPOP) which claims a membership of 12,000 people, and other spontaneous coalitions formed to support a government crusade.[151]

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[146] Anonymous interviews.

[147] Lulu Principle, "Garilao orders audit of NGOs", **The Manila Bulletin**, 8 October 1993.

[148] **Human Development Report 1993**, pg. 180

[149] "FVR launches birth control program today", **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 2 August 1993.

[150] "Cory now blamed for overpopulation", **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 20 July 1993.

[151] On 11 July 1993 for instance, 34 NGOs, POs and coalitions published an advertisement in the national press to commemorate World Population Day and appeal for population programmes as part of a sustainable development strategy. Signatories included the FPOP, the PNGOC, PRRM and the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines.

The DOH also relies on NGOs more generally in the provision of health services. Public health expenditure in the Philippines, equivalent to 5.6% of GNP, is the highest in South-East Asia.[152] Much of it is squandered however on bureaucracy, urban-based facilities, and capital-intensive operations such as an Asian Heart Centre, built in Manila under Marcos. In contrast, health services in rural areas are sparse and inadequate, and the country as a whole has only one doctor for every 6,570 people, the second lowest rate in South-East Asia, and only one nurse for every 2,680, the lowest rate by far.[153] As a result, the DOH relies heavily on NGOs for the provision of primary health care in rural areas, medical support services in the event of natural disasters, and medical assistance for communities displaced or affected by counter-insurgency operations. The DOH has had particular problems in recruiting young doctors to serve in rural areas, because government pay is so low, and because doctors, mostly from urban areas and privately-educated at great cost to themselves or their families, emigrate or opt for lucrative practice in urban areas. In July 1993, Flavier announced that young doctors going to the barrios would be paid P24,000 per month (US$800), the rough salary of an urban-based professional, yet with the decentralization of his department's budget, the DOH will have difficulty enforcing the policy on a nation-wide basis. Most doctors in rural areas receive only P6,800 per month under the Salary Standardization Law, and as a result, many towns with populations exceeding 20,000 lack even a single doctor. For many rural doctors, NGOs have become a lifeline and NGOs now supplement doctors' salaries (by as much as 300% of the government salary) or provide

[152] **Human Development Report 1993**, pp. 158-159.

[153] Ibid. Indonesia has only one doctor for every 9,410 people. For nurses, Indonesia is second to the Philippines, but with one for every 1,260 people, more than double the rate in the Philippines.

equipment and medicine.[154]

9. Conclusion.

Analysis of state-NGO relations between 1986 and 1993, reveals a number of characteristics. The first is the fragmented nature of government policy-making: The National Economic and Development Authority, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Presidential Management Staff, the Department of Interior and Local Government and the Presidential Adviser on Rural Development all share responsibility for monitoring and regulating the NGO community, while none has the powers or resources to carry out its functions effectively. Second, policy at the executive level is geared primarily towards securing NGO support for a social consensus that boosts democratic legitimacy. A plethora of executive-level committees have been established for this purpose, but few have led to substantive policy innovations. Third, individual government departments, lacking firm policy direction from the executive, have shaped their own relationships with NGOs. Fourth, as in other developing countries, a clear distinction exists between the policy of reform-oriented ministries such the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), and the Department of Health (DOH), and ministries concerned with maintaining order such as the Department of National Defense and the Department of Interior and Local Government. Fifth, the executive has brought a significant number of NGO leaders into the government at cabinet level, and these leaders have in turn recruited NGO personnel into their departments, maintaining close ties to the NGOs with

[154] Carlos Conde, "Flavier pays UP doc a visit", **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 5 July 1993.

which the were previously associated.[155] Sixth, state-NGO relationships are to a significant extent based on personal ties.

The same analysis also shows that state-NGO relationships represent an important characteristic of the degree of partial embedded autonomy which characterises the Philippine state. First, pockets of efficiency have been created through mechanisms such as the Presidential Social Fund, and through involving NGOs on a wide-scale basis in monitoring the implementation of major socio-economic projects, reducing corruption and undermining the patrimonial character of resource allocation policies.[156] Second, a degree of strategic partnership has between achieved been reform-oriented ministries and NGOs to attack entrenched socio-economic elites, including landlords in the case of DAR-NGO collaboration, and illegal loggers in the case of DENR-NGO collaboration.[157] Third, NGOs have helped to fill significant voids in the government's service delivery functions, as illustrated by the examples of housing and health service provision. Fourth, NGOs represent an intermediate institutional tier, linking the state to traditionally disempowered strata of society, as their initial cooperation with the Philippine Coconut Authority, and their on-going collaboration

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[155] Few NGOs debate this point, although one noted left-wing intellectual has argued that "A weak or unmotivated state will always be tempted to let the NGOs, all fired up by the slogan of "People Power", take up the work that it should be doing in...underdeveloped areas" (Armando Malay Jr., "Old Reflexes, New Slogans: The Mid-life Crisis of the Philippine Left", paper presented to the Second European Conference on Philippine Studies, SOAS, University of London, 13-15 April 1994).

[156] On her government's record of collaboration with NGOs, former President Corazon Aquino noted in 1992 that "The most successful school building programme was funded by the government [through the PSF] but implemented by NGOs- in record time and with extraordinary economy, integrity...[and] an unprecedented efficiency in the allocation of public funds" (Corazon Aquino, "Reflections on Our Democracy", in Corazon Aquino et al, **The Aquino Administration: Record and Legacy (1986-1992)**, University of the Philippines Press, Quezon City, 1992, pg. 9).

[157] Significantly, the only two cabinet ministers to serve full five-year terms, Dr. Mita Pardo de Tavera and Fulgencio Factoran, came from NGO backgrounds, which offered partial protection at least from Congressional opposition.

with the DAR illustrates.

The analysis also emphasises the point made in Chapter 1, that states in the Asia, Africa and Latin America instinctively relate to NGOs by trying to co-opt them. A partial explanation for this reflex can be found in what Migdal describes as the "duality of state strength", where states seem able to penetrate society extensively, yet "are unable to implement goal-oriented change".[158] To NGOs however, this duality is less apparent than the actual manifestations of state strength, namely its control over the allocation of resources -- and its infrastructure of military power, weapons used systematically against them. Yet, in this light, the links forged between 1986 and 1993 seem all the more remarkable. The executive, the military and every government ministry now relate to NGOs in various forms of partnership and alliance and these relationships represent a significant characteristic of state-society relations.

The Philippines lacks the long tradition of NGO-state collaboration found in India. Yet, the great strides made in the period since 1986 suggest a new, durable, tradition of collective action and of intermediate institutional linkages between state and society that help consolidate the quasi-democratic character of the Philippine polity. Effective state-NGO relationships are by no means a panacea for the development dilemmas with which the Philippines is faced. They have however proved themselves to be an important component in an overall programme of reform. Here, the central argument is that NGOs have a significant role to play in empowering *states* in the developing world and helping them to implement structural and public policy reforms. Chapters 4-6 look at *popular* empowerment and the role of NGOs, a more central concern in the contemporary NGO literature.

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[158] Joel Migdal, **Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World**, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1988, pp. 8-9.

CHAPTER FOUR: Beyond the State: The Politics of NGO Action

1. Introduction.

One of the advantages of the term "non-governmental organisation" is that it suggests an inverse, even a dialectical, relationship between NGOs and the state. In practice, this inverse and dialectical relationship represents the very *raison d'etre* of NGOs. In the developing world, counter-mobilization in response to short-comings in state performance in promoting economic development and in mobilizing broadly-based popular support represents the most significant aspect of NGO action. Strong NGO communities are invariably found in developing countries where the state lacks the capacity to promote economic development and political participation effectively and where the state tolerates, if not encourages, the voluntary sector. Thus, while the mainstream NGO literature suggests that development NGOs represent a response primarily to socio-economic deprivation, in reality, the response of NGOs to development dilemmas is determined primarily by the particular character of the state.

Much of the political significance and the political character of NGOs however can only be seen by looking beyond the state and beyond the limited framework of state-NGO relationships. This chapter examines three important aspects of NGO politics; the organisation of the NGO community; the institutional forces that underpin it; and particular mechanisms by which NGOs participate in politics. The level of organisation among NGOs is an important determinant of their political character and efficacy. As Chapter 1 noted, where NGOs are not outrightly suppressed, states instinctively relate to NGOs by trying to attract and coopt their support. Opposition to the vast financial resources and coercive machinery of the state therefore depends on organisation among and coordination between NGOs.

Second, the political character of the NGO community is also a reflection of the institutional forces that underpin it. In the Philippines, four institutional forces have been particularly influential in the growth of the NGO community: elite philanthropists; the Christian Churches; overseas development assistance agencies and the underground left. For different reasons and to varying effect, each force has promoted separate but overlapping sections of the NGO community. Few NGO studies discuss the influence of non-state institutional forces yet, like the state, such forces threaten the autonomy of NGOs and exert a powerful influence over NGOs and the NGO community. Third, the political character of the NGO community is influenced by the particular mechanisms that facilitate participation. Philippine NGOs participate in politics through a number of mechanisms but four have proved especially significant since 1986: coalition-building; contemporary social movements; local government structures; and election campaigns. Each is considered below in turn.

2. The Organisation of the NGO Community.

The Philippine NGO community is characterised by a high degree of heterogeneity and by conflicting political or strategic orientations. In a refinement of typologies developed by Korten and Carroll (see Chapter 1) Constantino-David captures much of this heterogeneity and conflict in Figure 3.[1] The typology illustrates two important features of the Philippine NGO community. First, a strong distinction exists between membership-based organisations

[1] Refining her earlier typologies in "The Limits and Possibilities of Philippine NGOs in Development", paper presented to the LAMBATLAYA National Conference on "Networking in the '90s: Affirming Commitment to the Decade of Nationalism", University of the Philippines, 22-24 November 1990, pp. 1-3; "The Need for Greater Unity and the CODE-NGO" in **Forging Unity Towards Development**, Proceedings of the First National NGO Congress, University of the Philippines, Quezon City, 4 December 1991, pg. 9; and "The Philippine experience in scaling up" in Michael Edwards and David Hulme (Eds.), **Making a Difference: NGOs and Development in a Changing World**, Earthscan Publications, London, 1992, pg. 138.

and those established as service agencies or institutions, echoing similar distinctions internationally. Since 1986, "Peoples Organisation" has become a generic label for a complex range of largely traditional organisational structures such as trade unions, peasant associations or rural cooperatives. NGOs by contrast represent a more recent institutional innovation, dating largely to the 1970s. Boundaries between POs and NGOs in the Philippines are rapidly blurring: many NGOs are promoting membership while POs are acquiring professional staff, and bureaucratic structures and are by-passing NGOs to secure foreign funding directly. Second, DJANGOs[2] (development, justice and advocacy-focused NGOs) account for only 11.5% of the total number of (non-membership) NGOs according to Constantino-David, numbering over 2,000 in 1991.[3] Writers such as Carroll however equate DJANGOs (using equivalent labels) with the NGO community as a whole, and often ignore the complex and hostile political environment in which DJANGOs invariably operate.

A survey of 69 NGOs in Cebu by Uy-Etemadi suggests however that DJANGOs are stronger and more prevalent than Constantino-David concedes. According to the survey, 27% of Cebu's NGOs are committed to consciousness-raising and 21% to community organising as the primary strategy through which they fulfil their goals. A further 8.29% concentrate on lobbying and 6.08% on rallies and demonstrations, leaving a minority committed to Korten's "first generation" strategies; 18.78% to service delivery and the remaining 18.84% to relief operations and to charitable activities.[4] Uy-Etemadi's findings may need to be treated with caution however since elite/philanthropic NGOs or Constantino-David's

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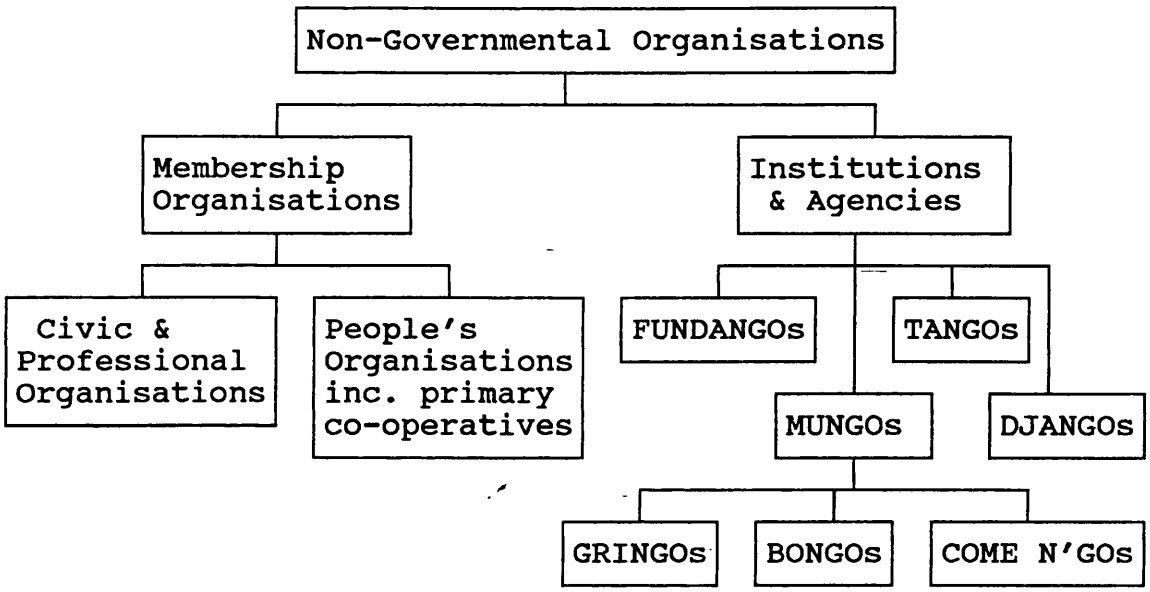
[2] An acronym derived from a common term in the Philippines for poor street children, originating from an American film where the main character came from a similar background (Karina Constantino-David, interview, 29 April 1993).

[3] Constantino-David, "The Philippine experience in scaling-up", pg. 138. Based on an estimate of around 20,000 NGOs in the Philippines in 1991.

[4] Felisa Uy-Etemadi, "NGOs in Cebu in Pursuit of Development", **Data Links** (University of the Philippines-Cebu), Vol. 2 No. 3, April 1993, pg. 4.

"MUNGOs" actively engage in community organising.

Figure 3:
Typology of Philippine NGOs



Key:

BONGOs:	Business-Organised/-Oriented NGOs
COME N'GOs:	Fly-by-Night or paper NGOs
DJANGOs:	Development, Justice and Advocacy NGOs
FUNDANGOs:	Philanthropic Foundations
GRINGOs:	Government-Run or -Inspired NGOs
MUNGOs:	Mutant NGOs
TANGOs:	Traditional NGOs

Source: Karina Constantino-David, interview, 9 July 1993.

Philippine NGOs are predominantly small. According to ADB research, Philippine NGOs typically have less than 50 staff and annual budgets of less than P2m (See Table 5).[5]

[5] The research identified 9 NGOs capable of participating in ADB-funded government projects, including PBSP and PRRM. The remaining seven are listed in Table 3. Supporting ADB's data, Wegner's analysis of 1988 CIDA data on 159 NGOs reveals that 66% had less than 20 staff while 69% have annual income of less than P2m. See Rodger Wegner, **Nicht-Regierungs-organisationen als entwickungspolitische Hoffnungstrager: Eine Studie zur privater Entwicklungshilfe auf den Philippinen** [Non-Governmental Organisations as Vehicles of Development: A Study of Private Development Assistance to the Philippines],

Only three Philippine NGOs have more than 200 staff (See Table 4). Most national-level NGOs function effectively as networks that coordinate autonomous local-level organisations, and primary NGOs with unitary structures and nationwide reach such as PRRM and TFDP are very much the exception. PBSP, for instance, engages in direct programme work but is primarily a donor institution which coordinates a network of supported NGOs and POs. Similarly, the Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA) had 75 staff and income of P5.2m in 1992 but, with 62 member organisations scattered throughout Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao, is one of the few NGOs with a genuinely national presence.[6]

A number of factors account for the prevalence of small NGOs.[7] First, of 7,000 islands in the Philippines, 2000 are inhabited, with about 100 islands accounting for 80-90% of the population. Similarly, 80 distinctive languages are spoken with 8 languages accounting for 90% of the population, enhancing cultural diversity.[8] Inter-island NGO programmes

Table 4.
The Top Three: The Philippines' Largest NGOs, 1992

Name	Income (Pesos)	Staff
Philippine Business for Social Progress	141m	237
Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement	49m	361
Task Force Detainees of the Philippines	n/a	288

Notes:
(1) Income: calendar year 1992.
(2) Staff: as at 31.12.1992. Includes contract or part-time workers.
Sources: PBSP, PRRM, TFDP.

Demokratie und Entwicklung Band 10, LIT Verlag, Hamburg, 1993, pg. 182.

[6] **PhilDHRRA 1992 Annual Report**, pp. 3, 119, and 128-129.

[7] The following factors draw on interviews with Karina Constantino-David and Terrence George.

[8] David Wurfel, **Filipino Politics: Development and Decay**, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1988, pg. 27.

Table 5
Selected Development NGOs

NGO	Income (Pesos)	Staff
Agency for Community Education Services Inc. (ACES)	1.5m	22
Farmers Assistance Board (FAB)	1.5m	25
Kapwa Upliftment Foundation (KAPWA)	N/A	18
Leyte-Samar Rural Development Workers Association (LABRADOR)	3.8m	66
National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATCO)	N/A	17
Organisation for Training, Research and Development (OTRADEV)	1.7m	N/A
Participatory Research Organisation of Communities in the Struggle for Self-Reliance (PROCESS)	1.5M	36

Notes:
(1) Income: annual budget 1987
(2) Staff: 1987. Includes part-time workers and consultants but excludes volunteers.
Source: **Cooperation with NGOs in Agriculture and Rural Development**, Volume 1, Asian Development Bank, Manila, 1989, pp. 308-336.

require considerable resources (financial, administrative and personal) to maintain, making it difficult for national NGOs to maintain nationwide structures. Second, during martial law, political activists consciously promoted small and multiple NGO programmes to prevent the repression that a more centralised NGO community would have incurred. Third, in the difficult environment of the 1970s and 1980s, building NGO programmes of above-average size required enormous charisma and leadership skills but many potential NGO leaders associated with the NDF or other left groups were killed or imprisoned. Fourthly, the value placed on affinity groups in Filipino culture undermines larger structures dependent on less personal structures. Finally, many NGOs eschew the bureaucratic structures associated with the government bureaucracy to which they seek an alternative, enhancing the preference for

small NGOs.

Philippine NGOs are primarily local-based, focused on operations at the municipal, provincial or regional level. Generally, they proliferate in areas with a tradition of collective organisation and mobilization, rather than the poorest regions where the need for development NGOs is greatest but where political obstacles to NGO or PO organising are significant. A survey of NGOs registered under the 1991 Local Government Code provides one guide to NGO regional distribution (see Table 6) but should be treated with caution since many NGOs do not participate in local government structures. When correlated with population and average family income data (see Table 7), the survey indicates that NGO density is high in the Cordillera mountains, a region with a strong tradition of collective mobilization and anti-state protest but with above average family income for rural areas. By contrast, NGO density is lowest in the Central Visayas (excluding the capital, Manila, which

Table 6
Regional Distribution of NGOs

Region	Accredited NGOs (Total)
Region 1 (Ilocos)	2,470
Region 2 (Cagayan Valley)	875
Region 3 (Central Luzon)	1,528
Region 4 (Southern Tagalog)	1,848
Region 5 (Bicol)	1,151
Region 6 (Western Visayas)	1,819
Region 7 (Central Visayas)	702
Region 8 (Eastern Visayas)	1,245
Region 9 (Western Mindanao)	973
Region 10 (Northern Mindanao)	1,293
Region 11 (Southern Mindanao)	1,009
Region 12 (Central Mindanao)	768
National Capital Region (Metro Manila)	343
Cordillera Autonomous Region	810
Total	16,834

Source: "NGA-LGU-NGO Partnership Development Program Survey Report", Bureau of Local Government Development, Department of the Interior and Local Government, October 1993, pg. 11.

Table 7
Regional Distribution of NGOs:
Population and Poverty Correlations

Region	Population (000's)	NGO Density	Average Family Income
Region 1	3,551	0.69	34,031
Region 2	2,341	0.37	32,939
Region 3	6,199	0.24	46,855
Region 4	8,266	0.22	37,978
Region 5	3,910	0.29	26,570
Region 6	5,392	0.33	31,164
Region 7	4,593	0.15	27,972
Region 8	3,055	0.40	25,345
Region 9	3,159	0.30	31,984
Region 10	3,510	0.36	35,801
Region 11	4,457	0.22	37,132
Region 12	3,171	0.24	35,090
NCR	7,929	0.04	79,314
CAR	1,146	0.70	33,838
Total/Average	60,685	0.27	40,408

Notes:
(1) Population: 1990 data.
(2) NGO density: NGOs per 1,000 people as per Table 6.
(3) Average family income: Pesos. 1990 data. Average urban family income = P60,330. Average rural family income = P28,284.
Source (Population and income data): **1991 Philippine Statistical Yearbook**, National Statistical Coordination Board, Manila, 1991, pp. 2 and 2-13.

is anomalous) where family incomes are below the rural average, but where social polarisation is intense and where links between landlords, politicians, the military and local government officials inhibit the proliferation of "DJANGOs". The link is not clear cut however. The Eastern Visayas, the poorest region in the country, has a relatively high NGO density, while Central Luzon, the traditional focal point for peasant rebellion has a relatively low density, reflecting the relatively greater availability of government support services.

3. Forces Behind the Proliferation of NGOs.

The heterogeneity of the Philippine NGO community is explained in large part by the institutional forces that underpin it and the competing objectives that motivate their support. Implicit in most analyses of NGOs, especially of development NGOs, is the assumption that NGOs share an almost uniform political orientation, characterised by concern primarily for the poorest of the poor and a commitment primarily to their political and economic empowerment. David Korten, for example, argues that

> A healthy voluntary sector is characterized by a substantial number and variety of independent [voluntary organisations], representing an array of distinctive and often conflicting commitments. Their small size, independence and focused value commitments give them a capacity for social and institutional innovation seldom found in either government or business....Their commitment to integrative values over political or economic values gives them a natural orientation to the perceived needs of politically and economically disenfranchised elements of the population that are not met through the normal processes of government or the economic processes of the market.[9]

In reality however, "the conflicting commitments", which he acknowledges, rule out any uniform or coherent "natural orientation" towards "disenfranchised elements of the population". As the previous section illustrates, NGO "communities" are characterised by ideological, personality and regional cleavages. As the following section illustrates, different institutional forces promote NGOs in the Philippines, leading to important institutional cleavages.

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[9] David Korten, **Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda**, Kumarian Press, West Hartford, 1990, pg. 98. In a similiar vein, Hirsch argues that the ideology of Thai NGOs is distinctly non-statist. "Foremost in the NGO discourse", Hirsch writes, "are concepts of dignity, self-reliance, decision-making power, bargaining power and others reflecting an alternative conceptualization of rural development" (Philip Hirsch, **Development Dilemmas in Rural Thailand**, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1990 pg. 15). In reality however, a large section of the Thai NGO community, dominated by philanthrophic NGOs, adheres to more conservative values (See Amara Pongsapich and Nitaya Kataleeradabhan, **Philanthropy, NGO Activities and Corporate Funding in Thailand**, Chulalongkorn University Social Research Institute, Bangkok, 1994).

4. Elite Philanthropy.

In the Philippines, elite philanthropy represents a political force in a number of respects. First, prominent business groupings support the work of Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), the largest NGO in the Philippines, established in 1970 by the Council for Economic Development, the Philippine Business Council and the Association for Social Action. Inspired by the Venezuelan *Dividendo Voluntario para la Comunidad* (Voluntary Dividend for the Community) and established as "the private sector's united and systematic response to the [country's] socio-economic problems", PBSP aims to support economic projects implemented by low-income groups.[10] Corporate members set aside 1% of net profit before tax for social development, of which 20% is committed to PBSP.[11] Second, many of PBSP's 158 corporate members (1992) support their own foundations with the remaining 0.80% of net profits committed to social development. The Soriano family, for instance, lead shareholders of San Miguel Corporation (SMC), the Philippines' largest business conglomerate,[12] supports community development projects through the Andres Soriano Group of Foundations,[13] in addition to direct support for PBSP.[14] Companies and families not associated with PBSP also support their own development NGOs. The Zobel de Ayala family, lead shareholders of Ayala Land, another of the Philippines' largest conglomerates,[15] funds development activities through the socio-economic division of the

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[10] Ruth Callanta, "Philippine Business for Social Progress", **NGO Strategic Management in Asia: Focus on Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Philippines**, Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC), Manila, 1988, pg. 121.

[11] **Philippine Business for Social Progress 1992 Annual Report**, pg. 1.

[12] With capitalization of US$2.7b in 1992, ("SMC listed among world's leading firms", **The Manila Chronicle**, 15 July 1993).

[13] See Chay Florentino Hofilena, "Doing Good- And Making Profit", **The Manila Chronicle**, 24 October 1993.

[14] SMC Chairman Andres Soriano III was PBSP Chairman in 1992.

[15] With capitalization in 1992 of US$2.17b ("SMC listed...").

Ayala Foundation. In addition to Ayala family backing, the foundation receives funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Chase Manhattan Bank, Levi's International and J.P. Morgan.[16] Third, family or business foundations consolidate their influence through coalitions such as the Association of Foundations (AoF) which includes 9 corporate and 14 family foundations among its 102 members.[17] As founding networks, AoF and PBSP helped to establish the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) in 1991.

Elite philanthropy is used to pursue a variety of political objectives. Often it is directed to securing commercial gain. Ayala Foundation activities in Cebu City and Bacoor, Cavite, for instance, support Ayala Land property developments; "squatters on properties bought by Ayala Land are resettled elsewhere with the foundation providing infrastructure, credit facilities and skills training".[18] Second, in the Philippines, where Presidents must seek cabinet ministers and other officials outside Congress, prominent businessmen also support philanthropic activities to increase their public profile and to secure political office. In the case of PBSP, for instance, 10 board members joined the Ramos administration in 1992 including Alberto Romulo (Foreign Secretary), Ramon del Rosario, (Finance Secretary), Rizalino Navarro (Trade and Industry Secretary), Roberto Sebastian (Agriculture Secretary) and Jose Cuisia (Central Bank Governor).[19] Third, philanthropy helps to undermine insurgency and business donations to NGOs echo the ebb and flow of insurgency (see further in Chapter 5); PBSP was established in 1970 amid renewed rural unrest but as insurgency

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[16] Hofilena, "Doing Good...".

[17] **1990 Directory of Philippine Foundations and Non-Governmental Organisations**, Association of Foundations, Manila, 1990. 81 member organisations were established before 1986, the first in 1926.

[18] Hofilena, "Doing Good...".

[19] **[PBSP] 1992 Annual Report**, pg. 7.

weakened after 1990, its corporate donations fell from P36.6m in 1991 to P27.9m in 1992 and were expected to fall further in 1993.[20] Finally, philanthropy helps to undermine pressure for increased state spending on social services, increased taxation, or structural reforms such as land redistribution while also helping to depoliticize NGO action.[21]

Elite philanthropic NGOs represent an even greater force in local politics. Well-funded and politically-connected foundations of prominent local families attract foreign funding, undermine insurgency and popular organisation initiatives, influence other NGOs or NGO coalitions or oppose government structural reform programmes. In Panay, the Gerry Roxas Foundation secured a large share of USAID funding to the island in 1993, and its role in providing credit to other voluntary organisations coincided with the USAID and Philippine government strategy of undermining communist insurgency on the island.[22] In Cebu City, the Ramon Aboitz Foundation Inc. (RAFI) has become an influential force in local NGO politics. With funding from USAID, RAFI began construction in 1993 of the Eduardo Aboitz Development Centre Inc., a purpose-built six-story building, to house other NGOs and to host NGO conferences and training seminars. "Progressive" NGOs saw the planned centre as an attempt to co-opt Cebu's vibrant NGO community, to undermine its political and socio-economic impact and to make it a captive force for local elite politicians.[23]

The island of Negros illustrates the competing political objectives that often animate

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[20] Ibid, pg. 41 and anonymous interview with a PBSP manager. To stem the collapse in corporate donations, PBSP launched a Center for Corporate Citizenship in July 1993.

[21] On the latter point, Ernesto Garilao, PBSP's former Executive Director, argued in 1987 that Philippines NGOs were "creating a new service sector- the social development industry" (Ernesto Garilao, "Indigenous NGOs as Strategic Institutions: Managing the Relationship with Government and Resources", **World Development**, Vol. 15 (Special Supplement), 1987, pg. 116.

[22] In May 1993 for instance, GRF received P5.75m to fund a credit window for NGOs and small businesses under USAID's Food for Peace and Voluntary Cooperation programme (**The Manila Bulletin**, 10 June 1993).

[23] Anonymous interviews with NGO activists and academics in Cebu, May 1993.

the socio-economic development strategies of elite philanthropic NGOs. According to mid-1980s statistics, Negros accounts for 68% of Philippine sugar production, while 90% of the 1.8m population is dependent on the sugar industry.[24] Underpinning intense social polarization, 4% of landowners own nearly 50% of land while 72% of the population of Negros Occidental and 80% in Negros Oriental, the island's two provinces, are poor, compared to 49% nationally.[25] Throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s, Negros was racked by crisis as prices for sugar fluctuated on world markets. The worst occurred in 1985 when sugar production fell to 1.6mt (metric tons) (from 2.9mt in 1975 and 2.2mt in 1979),[26] leaving 250,000 sugar workers unemployed and famine conditions that killed hundreds. In the municipality of Kabankálan, 25 to 30 children a month died at the height of the famine.[27]

Traditionally, landlords in Negros supported workers during the fallow season between sugar crops, and bore significant responsibility for food supply, housing, education, health and credit on the island. State agencies, except those concerned with security and the purchase of sugar, were relatively weak. During and following the famine of 1985, ODA donors sought partners in Negros to deliver emergency food supplies to vulnerable communities and to boost the production of subsistence foodstuffs. By 1985, a number of landlord foundations were already active in providing emergency relief, and in the absence of appropriate state agencies, ODA donors provided substantial funding to them. As a result,

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[24] Larry Jagan and John Cunnington, **Social Volcano: Sugar Workers in the Philippines**, War on Want, London, 1987, pg. 4.

[25] "Negros: Weathering The Storm", **IBON Facts and Figures**, Vol. 17 No.7, 15 April 1993, pg. 3.

[26] Amal Malhorta, John P. McAndrew and Angelito P. Dela Vega, "A Critical Assessment of the UNICEF Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Program in Negros Occidental", A Report prepared for Oxfam America, February-March 1988, pg. 2.

[27] Jagan and Cunnington, **Social Volcano...**, pg. 4.

landlord-controlled development NGOs, established to attract and to channel ODA funding, proliferated on Negros.

After 1986 however, Negros's special plight intensified national debate about land reform, and, under pressure, the island's elite NGOs pursued three distinct political strategies. The first strategy was pioneered by PBSP, some of whose corporate members owned land in Negros (for instance, SMC and the Central Azucarera Don Pedro). After February 1986, PBSP focus in Negros shifted from micro-enterprise development to land reform, and under its Negros Land for a Productive Life Programme (NLPLP), PBSP collaborated with the provincial government and the Philippine National Bank (PNB) to enable 1,005 farmer beneficiaries in 13 settlement areas to acquire 3,000 hectares of land foreclosed by PNB.[28] In 1988, it helped 817 employees of the Kabankalan Sugar Company (KABUCO) to form the KABUCO Agricultural Workers Co-operative Inc. and buy a 1,000 hectare KABUCO farm under CARP from Philippine Investments Management Consultants (PHINMA), a PBSP member.[29]

Many sugar planter NGOs however were against CARP and sought to balance the return of sugar estates to their owners with a diversification of Negros's monocrop economy and a more liberal and institutionalized approach to traditional paternalism. Organised by Daniel Lacson,[30] a number of sugar planter NGOs formed the Associated Council of Organisations for Development (ACCORD) and the Multi-Sectoral Alliance for Development (MUAD) to provide project partners for ODA donors who pumped millions of dollars into

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[28] Ramon Consing, Para-legal Officer, Agrarian Reform Alliance of Democratic Organisations in Negros (ARADO), interview, Bacolod, 1 November 1993. Consing is a former PBSP employee.

[29] **[PBSP] 1992 Annual Report**, pp. 9 & 19.

[30] Founder of the Negros Economic Development Foundation; Officer-in-Charge, Negros Occidental March 1986-June 1987; and Governor, Negros Occidental, 1987-1992.

Negros following the 1985 famine (see footnote 71). Most of these NGOs, and their patrons, supported Lacson's "60-30-10" plan to rehabilitate an estimated 330,000 hectares of foreclosed land (under which 60% would be returned to landowners, 30% committed to nucleus estates owned by farmer co-operatives producing high-value non-food crops, and 10% given to landless farmers for subsistence crop production).[31] Lacson promoted a number of ambitious ODA-funded plans which depended on broad support from sugar planter NGOs. Instead however, schemes such as the Negros Relief and Development Programme (NRDP) and the Economic District Management System (EDMS) divided them, and by 1991 the EDMS had collapsed.

The conflict essentially pitted the traditional paternalism of the Council of Service Delivery NGOs, the main alliance of landlord-financed NGOs in Negros, against the technocratic approach of Daniel Lacson and Sixto K. Roxas.[32] Yet it also illustrated the extent to which NGOs had become new institutional vehicles to advance the political interests of traditional family clans. Liberal planter NGOs such as the Chito Foundation, founded in 1976 by sugar planter Eduardo Locsin in memory of his son, were estranged by Daniel Lacson's hostility to established NGOs in Negros such as PBSP[33] and his attempts to displace them. Many also suspected that ACCORD and MUAD served primarily as vehicles to advance the political career of Lacson and felt the NRDF and EDMS created a bureaucracy that curbed their autonomy. Emerging triumphantly from the conflict however, Lacson was

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[31] "Negros: Weathering the Storm", pg. 4.

[32] The EDMS and a broader Fifteen Year Master Plan aimed to eliminate poverty in Negros by 2002 by converting a monocrop economy into an industrial hub, a mini-Taiwan. Both were designed by Sixto K. Roxas, Sixto K. Roxas Managers and Advisors (SKRMA) and the Foundation for Community and Management Technology (FCOMT).

[33] Despite corporate membership through the family-owned Negros Navigation Company, Lacson frequently condemned PBSP as communist-infiltrated. (Edgar Cadagat, Correspondents, Broadcasters and Reporters Association- Action News Service, interview, Bacolod, 1 November 1993).

appointed by President Ramos as Chairman of the state-owned Philippine National Bank (which controlled much of the foreclosed land on Negros) and Presidential Adviser on Rural Development in June 1992.

Sugar planters to Lacson's right used NGOs to mobilize a third political strategy. The most important was the Sugar Development Foundation, an adjunct to the anti-communist and anti-land reform campaigns of the Movement for an Independent Negros (MIN) and the Negros Anti-Communist Crusade (NACC). The Sugar Development Foundation paid for arms and training for Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Units (see chapter 3) which attacked mass-based POs occupying foreclosed land. The most prominent targets were the 80,000 strong National Federation of Sugar Workers-Food and General Trades (NFSW-FGT) and the Small Farmers Association of Negros (SFAN). By the early 1990s, as the level of insurgency declined, the SDF had fragmented into 12 units, corresponding to Negros Occidental's 12 sugar milling districts, each supporting CAFGU units in its area. Charting its demise, a journalist noted in 1993, "some planters believing that communists [are] no longer a threat and many planters have stopped contributions to the SDF altogether. In one district, only 8.5% of about 1,000 planters now contribute".[34]

5. The Christian Churches.

In the Philippines, the Christian churches were uniquely placed to promote the proliferation of NGOs. With Muslims, concentrated in Manila and Mindanao, accounting for almost 10% of the population, Islam played a small but increasingly important role in

[34] Eli Tajanlangit, "As Negros prepares for peace, a new cycle of war begins", **The Manila Chronicle**, 16 March 1993.

promoting NGOs in the early 1990s.[35] With 85% of the population Catholic however, the Catholic church was especially well placed. It rivalled state institutions in ideological coherence, nation-wide reach, ability to permeate remote barrios and to affect the lives of marginalised social strata. Yet, throughout the twentieth century, Protestants in the Philippines have contributed to national life out of all proportion to their small numbers, and the Protestant churches are another important force in NGO politics.

Catholic church institutions began to organise peasants and farmers during the 1940s and in 1953 the Catholic Charities was established to coordinate Catholic welfare activities.[36] During the mid-1960s, the Catholic Church's involvement in socio-economic development was consolidated under the influence of Vatican II and liberation theology. In 1966 the Catholic hierarchy established an independent Episcopal Commission on Social Action which in turn established the National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA).[37] By mid-1968, 2,000 church-sponsored projects existed, including

> credit unions, improved rice production, cottage industries, medical clinics, youth-recreational centers, farmers' associations, piggeries, poulteries, housing projects, ...land tenure [projects], and one electricity cooperative...In 42 out of 48 dioceses and prelatures..., a social action director had been appointed...Eight dioceses had established social action secretariats manned by full-time priest-directors and about twenty professionally-trained lay workers. About 400 parishes out of 1,650 were engaged in some socio-economic

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[35] NGOs are increasingly responsible for mobilising and allocating *zakat* (legal alms) and *sadaqqa* (voluntary alms), religious contributions traditionally managed by mosques. Usually these contributions fund *madrasah* (educational institutions) that do not receive state funding, but increasingly they are used to fund community development activities (See Carmen Abubakar, "Zakat and Sadaqqa Practices Among the Moros of the Philippines", in Mohamed Ariff (Ed.), **The Islamic Voluntary Sector in Southeast Asia**, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1991).

[36] See Fabros, **The Church and Its Social Involvement...**, Chapter 2. Catholic church organisations such as the Institute of Social Order and the Knights of Columbus played an important role in establishing the Federation of Free Workers in 1950 and the Federation of Free Farmers in 1953, dominant (and state-approved) trade union and peasant association respectively through the 1950s and '60s.

[37] Ibid, pg. 97.

endeavour.[38]

These activities "went beyond the social welfare and relief orientation" but, Fabros notes,

> they dealt primarily with cooperative and nonconflictual aspects of community development. Nothing significant was done toward the organisation of farmers, land distribution, and other community development projects that would involve conflict between groups and change the existing social structures.[39]

With the declaration of martial law in 1972 however, powerful church institutions responded by intervening directly in group conflicts. NASSA established three regional secretariats by 1974; the Luzon Secretariat for Social Action (LUSSA); the Visayas Secretariat for Social Action (VISSA); and the Mindanao-Sulu Secretariat for Social Action (MISSA). By 1981, there were 68 diocesan social action centers nationwide,[40] important umbrellas that sheltered popular organisational initiatives from military repression. NASSA promoted community organising further in 1975 through its Basic Christian Community-Community Organizing (BCC-CO) programme. In time, BCCs, "priestless prayer groups of thirty to fifty people",[41] became an important force in launching POs and NGOs. Lay facilitators sought to "conscienticize", ie. raise the critical consciousness of, parishioners through bible-sharing sessions and seminars and invited members to join sectoral organisations. By 1980, according to Jones, BCCs were active in one-third of dioceses and were viewed by one military authority as "practically...an infrastructure of political power in the entire country".[42] In another important stimulus to the establishment of sectoral-based POs and NGOs, the Association of Major Religious Superiors (AMRSP) established a number

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[38] Ibid, pg. 127.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Robert Youngblood, **Marcos Against the Church: Economic Development and Political Repression in the Philippines**, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1990, pg. 76.

[41] Alfred McCoy, **Priests on Trial**, Penguin Books, Victoria, 1984, pg. 161. Chapter 4 provides a vivid account of BCCs in Negros.

[42] Gregg R. Jones, **Red Revolution: Inside the Philippine Guerrilla Movement**, Westview Press, Boulder, 1989, pg. 209.

of task forces in 1974,[43] many of which were run by nuns.[44] The AMRSP also established an Office for Justice and Peace to assist NASSA's Justice and Peace Commission, and continued financial support for prominent POs including the Zone One Tondo Organisation, the Samahan ng Kristiyang Komunidad (Christian Community Association) and the National Federation of Sugar Workers.[45]

A number of factors animated this process of institution-building. First, Catholic funding agencies in Europe and North America such as CEBEMO (The Netherlands), or MISEREOR (Germany) multiplied the financial resources which Catholic church institutions committed to NGOs and POs. Similarly, Protestant funding agencies associated with the Geneva-based World Council of Churches, such as ICCO (Netherlands), Bread for the World (Germany) and Christian Aid (Britain) funded programmes of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP). Second, the diversity of ideological opinion within the church enabled it to work with other important forces: elite philanthropists, foreign donors and the underground left, cementing the role of NGOs in mobilising opposition to the Marcos regime. NASSA and the NCCP coordinated with foreign donors while the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) and the Bishops-Businessmens Conference (BBC) worked closely with prominent philanthropists. Philippine Priests Incorporated (PPI), and the underground Christians for National Liberation (CNL) (among others) linked church institutions to the underground left. Third, NGOs and POs provided an important institutional base for activists to develop the "praxis" of liberation theology, institutionalizing a split

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[43] Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP), Task Force Data Gathering, Task Force Urban Conscientization, Task Force Rural Conscientization and, later, Task Force Tribal Filipinos.

[44] A PPI survey of 250 priests in 1980 discovered that women religious were regarded as "united in their involvement in social action", (Jesus Fernandez, **The Church of the Philippines on the Threshold of the '80s**, Philippine Priests Inc., Manila, 1980, pg. 125

[45] Youngblood, **Marcos Against The Church...**, pg. 85.

between a popular church, and the hierarchical church embodied in the CBCP.[46]

The debate over liberation theology was sharpest in Mindanao. In 1980, Mindanao had only one priest per 14,634 Catholics (1 to 20,000 in parts) and only 14% of available priests (compared to 21.5% of the population).[47] As a result, the Mindanao church depended on the participation of the laity and a level of organisation among local communities that made their Christian character self-sustaining. To institutionalize lay participation in church life, Mindanao's bishops established the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference (MSPC), a body of bishops, priests, religious and laity modelled on the All-India Pastoral Conference. The MSPC met triennially from 1971.[48] In 1977, a MSPC secretariat (MSPCS) was established, Karl Gaspar, former manager of PBSP's Mindanao programme, was elected as MSPC Executive Secretary and in 1978, MSPC absorbed MISSA. The three developments further stimulated MSPC's role in supporting NGOs. In 1982 however Mindanao's bishops disassociated themselves from MSPC over fears of collaboration between NASSA, the various MSPC apostalates, (especially social action) and the underground left.[49]

The 1982 disassociation shattered what Kinne describes as the "main point of convergence in Asia of Christian and Marxist social struggle".[50] Over 15 years, thousands of BCCs mushroomed in Mindanao,[51] but were violently suppressed by AFP counter-

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[46] Bishop Julio Labayen, a leading proponent of liberation theology within the Catholic church, served as Director of NASSA from 1967 to 1981. On the tenets with which he infused the work of NASSA, see Julio Xavier Labayen, **To Be The Church Of The Poor**, Communications Foundation for Asia, Manila, 1986.

[47] Warren Kinne, **The Splintered Staff: Structural Deadlock in the Mindanao Church**, Claretian Publications, Quezon City, 1990, pg. 14.

[48] Ibid, pp. 43-44.

[49] The bishops were particularly influenced by policy guidelines adopted at NASSA's 1981 National Convention which stated that "burning issues of violence and revolution" could not be ignored and which called on the bishops to support popular struggle (Ibid, pg. 153).

[50] Ibid, pg. 155.

[51] Ibid, pg. 62.

insurgency operations; of 1,200 grass-roots lay leaders trained by the Community Formation Center between 1967 and 1988, for instance, 15 met with violent deaths. NGOs however, often located within diocesan social action centers, enjoyed greater physical security, and greater financial security than BCCs which mostly eschewed foreign funding.[52] Professionally-trained staff also strengthened the capacity of NGOs to endure military or para-military repression, while the socio-economic thrust of NGO programmes made them less vulnerable to hierarchical censure. As a result, NGOs represented arguably the main institutional legacy of MSPC.

Church-based NGOs, Thompson notes, played a significant role in the "EDSA Revolution" of February 1986, the rallies along Manila's Epifanio de la Santos Avenue that precipitated the collapse of the Marcos regime. The rallies were largely spontaneous and led by individuals, but Church organisations, notably *Aksyon sa Kapayapaan at Katarungan* (AKKAKPA, Action for Justice and Peace), had trained many of the leading activists in the preceding months.[53] Since 1986, the Christian churches have remained a significant force in NGO politics. Church-based NGOs played a prominent role in the main sectoral coalitions active between 1986 and 1993, especially those concerned with peace,[54] and three of the 10 NGO networks that founded CODE-NGO in 1991 were church-based; NASSA, NCCP and the Ecumenical Center for Development. At the Second Plenary Council of 1991, NGO action was reaffirmed by the Catholic hierarchy as "a concrete putting into practice of

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[52] Ibid, pg. 78.

[53] Mark R. Thompson, "Searching for a Strategy; The Traditional Opposition to Marcos and the Transition to Democracy in the Philippines", Ph.D. thesis, Yale University, 1991, pp. 458 & 461.

[54] Dr. Fely Carino of the NCCP and Fr. Frank Vargas of the AMRSP for instance played a prominent role in launching the Multi-Sectoral Peace Advocates, an informal but influential lobby that promoted peace talks between the Philippine government and the CPP-NPA-NDF (Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel, "Peace Coalitions", in **Coalition Experiences in the Philippines**, IPD and PCHRD, prepublication draft, 1993).

two key ideas much stressed in recent papal teaching on social issues: solidarity and love of preferences for the poor".[55] Overall however, church antagonism to the CPP affected the NGO community in a number of respects. First, NASSA was reorganised in 1987 to bring it under greater CBCP control. The CBCP also strengthened its Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) programme at the expense of NASSA's BCC-CO programme, especially in decisions taken at the Second Plenary Council.[56] Second, AMRSP relationships with its subordinate task forces led to acrimonious debate at annual conventions after 1986. Although dwarfing the AMRSP itself, task forces (especially TFDP) sought continued AMRSP sponsorship, given the uncertain character of the democratization process while opponents condemned them as national democratic (ie. pro-NDF). By 1993 however the task forces retained AMRSP sponsorship, an important protective umbrella for associated church-based NGOs. Third, CNL activists who previously supported NDF united front work by establishing NGOs in so-called "white areas", turned to new NGOs after 1986 to develop an institutional base to challenge CPP hegemony. Edicio de la Torre, for instance, one of CNL's founders, helped establish the Institute for Popular Democracy in 1987 and later, the Education for Life Foundation. Gerry Bulatao, AMRSP Secretary General from 1974 to 1976 before going underground with CNL, worked with the DAR before he helped establish KAISAHAN with Florencio Abad in 1990, becoming its Executive Director.

6. Development Assistance.

Development assistance, official and unofficial, is the life blood that sustains the Philippine NGO community. In 1991, development assistance to the Philippines amounted

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[55] **Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines**, Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, Manila, 1992, pg. 13.

[56] Ibid, pp. 52-53.

to US$1.4b.[57] of which roughly $102m or 7.2% (equivalent to 0.22% of GNP) was channelled through NGOs.[58] Development assistance, however, is a controversial force in Philippine NGO politics. According to David, it promotes "parasitism and dependence... exacerbating jealousies and rivalries...imposing an externally-generated priority system...eroding the norm of selflessness and commitment...[and depoliticizing] NGO work".[59] ODA first became a significant factor in the growth of the NGO community in 1972 when a small number of governments, mainly European, replaced support for government projects with aid to NGOs through co-financing agencies. Dutch aid after 1972, for instance, was channelled almost exclusively through CEBEMO, ICCO, NOVIB and SNV, averaging $7m to $8m per annum.[60]

Among voluntary organisations influential in NGO politics, the Rockfeller, Ford and Asia Foundations had a virtual monopoly until the mid-1960s when European Catholic and Protestant church funding agencies began to support NGO programmes through Philippine church partners (primarily NASSA and NCCP). European support (church and non-church) increased dramatically after 1972 and by the late 1970s, agencies such as NOVIB, CEBEMO and ICCO (Netherlands), MISEREOR (Germany) and Oxfam (Britain) had become important

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[57] **Philippines Development Cooperation 1991 Report**, United Nations Development Programme, Manila, July 1993, Foreword.

[58] Analysis of Table B.3, ibid, pp. 47-57, suggests that $82m was channelled to NGOs and POs in 1991 (excluding QUANGOs, private educational establishments and commercial enterprises). $20m has been added to compensate for an error in Table A.3, ibid, pg. 33, (see further below). In 1990-1991, ODA was equivalent to 3.0% of GNP (**Development Cooperation**, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris, 1992, pg. A-27).

[59] Randolf David, "The Role of International Development Agencies in the Philippines" in **Partnership: The Philippine-Canadian NGO Consultation for the CIDA Country Review Program**, Manila, 1988, pp. 71-72.

[60] Hanneke Van Eldik Thieme, "Dutch Development Assistance to the Philippines" in Joel Rocamora, Hanneke Van Eldik Thieme and Ernesto Hilario (Eds.), **European Official Development Assistance to the Philippines**, Council for Peoples Development (CPD) and Transnational Institute (TNI), Manila, 1992, pg. 2.

supporters of "progressive" (ie left-of-centre) Philippine NGOs, leading to accusations of their support for insurgency.[61] NOVIB's philosophy, for instance, of providing large grants to large NGOs and acting as lead agency in consortia provides significant influence over the strategies and orientations of some of the biggest NGOs, including PRRM and TFDP. In the case of Ford and Asia Foundations, the presence of representative offices and staff in Manila and the particular programme strategy enhances their influence, despite the relatively small size of their programmes.[62] By 1991, support from voluntary agencies in Europe, North America and Japan amounted to roughly $40m or 40% of total foreign funding to Philippine NGOs.[63]

Of the official donors, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) are the most

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[61] Mainly from right-wing anti-communist think-tanks in the US or Australia. "Financing a revolution: the NPA's European backers",in **Investigation**, EIR News Service, Washington, 16 December 1988, pg. 57, for instance, argues that "[European] church-related foundations account for most of the aid that is finding its way into secret NPA bank accounts".

[62] Of Ford Foundation's 1993 Philippines programme, worth $3m, roughly 50% was channelled to NGOs. Asia Foundation's programme was worth a little less (Terrence George, interview, 12 July 1993). Both programmes, however, are strongly policy-oriented and support research institutions concerned with NGO issues. Both programmes also seek to support pluralism and NGOs concerned with public-advocacy (**Current Interests of the Ford Foundation 1992 and 1993**, pg. 20, and **The Asia Foundation 1991 Annual Report**, pg. 32). Thus, most NGOs supported are social democratic in political orientation. Before the February 1986 elections, USAID channelled $369,000 to Asia Foundation for election-related projects. Asia Foundation in turn made a grant to the Federation of Catholic Broadcasters to fund the election activities of 19 radio stations (Sandra Burton, **Impossible Dream: The Marcoses, The Aquinos and the Unfinished Revolution**, Warner Books, New York, 1989, pp. 344-345).

[63] According to **Philippines: Development Cooperation 1991 Report**, Table A.3, Section 3, pg. 33, NGOs channelled $20m to the Philippines in 1991, the main donors being CARE, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Ford Foundation and Asia Foundation. The table however omits details of European funding agencies. In 1991, Christian Aid channelled £0.75m ($1m) (Christian Aid, letter to author, 25.5.1994), while at least 10 agencies gave as much or more. At a conservative estimate, therefore, these agencies channelled an additional $20m to Philippine NGOs in 1991.

influential. Between 1980 and 1991, USAID provided over $45m to more than 200 NGOs and POs,[64] $10m in 1991 alone,[65] making it the single most important foreign source of NGO funding. Most went to philanthropic NGOs,[66] leading to criticisms that USAID was promoting "a network of elite NGOs identified with and beholden to big business".[67] In January 1992, in a pioneering debt-for-nature swap designed to support environmental NGOs, USAID launched the Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE) with the World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), PBSP, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Philippine Central Bank. Under the plan, USAID agreed to release US$25m in phased tranches for the purchase of discounted Philippine debt on international markets. Interest and capital repaid on the debt, honoured in full by the Central Bank, finances a FPE endowment fund, which in August 1993 stood at US$22m, yielding annual interest of roughly $2m to fund NGO environmental projects.[68]

Since 1986, CIDA has established a firm rapport with broad sections of the NGO community, through support for NGO coalition-building initiatives and innovative funding

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[64] **Partnership in Development: A PVO Network for Sustainable Development**, USAID, Manila, September 1992, pg. 1.

[65] Donald Goertzen, "Agents for Change: NGOs take the lead in development process", **Far Eastern Economic Review**, 8 August 1991, pg. 20.

[66] USAID's Enterprise in Community Development (ECD) programme, for instance, promotes corporate social development activities. Under the ECD, 22 NGOs associated with some of the Philippines' largest corporations received grants totalling $11.4m between 1986 and 1990 ("How USAID's Programs Help the Philippines", n.d., and **Enterprise in Community Development Annual Report Financial Year 1992**, USAID, Manila, September, 1992).

[67] Francisco Lara Jr., "The Impact of Foreign Aid on People's Initiatives in Agrarian Reform", Philippine Peasant Institute research paper, Manila, 1990, pg. 4.

[68] G. Sidney Silliman, "Philippine Non-Governmental Organizations and Official Development Assistance", paper presented to the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, 24-27 March 1994, Boston, pg. 18.

mechanisms.[69] In March 1993, for instance, CIDA had C$46m (US$25m) committed to "third generation" projects (see table 8), including the Philippine Cooperative Development Assistance Programme, the WID NGO Umbrella project and the Philippine-Canada Human Resources Development programme (PCHRD).[70]

Table 8
CIDA Project Support to NGOs, March 1993

Project Title	Duration	Cost C$m
Philippine Cooperative Development Assistance Programme	1987-92	4.974
Dissemination of Ferrocement Rainwater Catchment System	1989-93	0.474
NCRFW Institutional Strengthening Project	1990-95	1.53
Women in Development NGO Umbrella Project	1990-95	3.65
Philippines-Canada Human Resources Development Programme (PCHRD)	1990-95	15.00
Philippine NGO Assistance Development Programme (PDAP) Phase 1	1986-90	4.88
Phase 2	1990-95	15.00
Canada Fund for Local NGO Initiatives	1992-93	0.50
Total		46.008

Source: CIDA In The Philippines: A Guide to Operational Projects, CIDA, Manila, March 1993.

In the late 1980s however, CIDA was criticized for marginalising established development NGOs from the design and implementation of ODA programmes, especially in

[69] In 1991, 35% of CIDA's US$17.6m programme was channelled directly through NGOs. Other funding was channelled indirectly through Philippine government departments (Goertzen, "Agents for Change...", pg. 20.

[70] These projects aim respectively to promote unification efforts among cooperatives and links with NGOs and government organisations; to empower women through the Development for Women and Transformative Action Foundation Inc. (DIWATA); and to strengthen NGO/PO capacity in training, advocacy, development education, networking and coalition building.

Negros where CIDA projects served mainly to strengthen sugar planter NGOs.[71] In response, 30 Philippine and 12 Canadian NGOs attended a conference on CIDA's Country Review Programme in June 1988 leading to the establishment of the PCHRD. As Arquiza notes, "...PCHRD...set a precedent. For the first time, Philippine NGOs would have substantial control over funding [and] more than 90% of funds would now pass through the Manila-based [Philippine-Canadian Joint Committee]".[72]

The early 1990s heralded innovative donor-NGO relationships. As Arquiza notes, by late 1993, FPE and PCHRD had proved relatively successful:

> In both cases, the Philippine NGO community succeeded in gaining access, albeit in a limited sense, to ODA decision-making processes. In both...a coalition of Philippine NGOs positioned themselves to be a major recipient or conduit of ODA monies. In the process of two consecutive coalition successes, the Philippine NGO participants have developed among themselves substantial points of unity.[73]

Despite the FPE and PCHRD successes however,[74] substantial differences remain between

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[71] In 1986, CIDA launched a C$100m five-year programme in the Philippines, increasing ten-fold 1981-1986 aid of C$11m. The central objective was to support immediate-impact community-based government and non-government initiatives. C$11m (P165m) was committed to the 3-year Negros Relief and Development Programme (NRDP), designed as a follow up to UNICEF's US$2.4m Emergency Quick Action Programme (ENQAP) 1985-1986, and in September 1989 CIDA provided an additional C$0.6m (P9m) for the first stage of the Economic District Management System (EDMS) programme. The bulk of the C$11m however was captured by sugar planter NGOs empowered by the ENQAP ("Report on the Economic District Management System: The Case of SALVAPUL BAMUR", Broad Initiatives for Negros Development (BIND), Bacolod, February 1990, and Edgar Cadagat, "An Evaluation of the EDMS Project in Negros", n.d.). According to one source, more than 400 sugar planter NGOs were established to avail of ENQAP, NRDF or EDMS funding, marginalising reputable development NGOs and mass-based POs (Ramon Consing, interview, 1 November 1993). See also Donald Goertzen, "Sweet and Sour: Planters and Peasants battle it out", **Far Eastern Economic Review**, 8 August 1991, pg. 24.

[72] Racquel Arquiza, "ODA Research", paper prepared by the Council for Peoples Development for the Institute for Development Research-sponsored Research Consortium on Policy Influencing, September 1993, pg. 17.

[73] Ibid, pg. 25.

[74] On these and other innovative NGO-donor relationships, see **Resource Manual on NGO-Managed Fund Mechanisms**, Caucus of Development NGO Networks and Transnational Institute, Quezon City, 1992.

foreign funders and Philippine NGOs, making ODA a significant variable in NGO politics.

7. The Underground Left.

The Communist Party of the Philippines, with its armed wing, the New Peoples Army and its united front, the National Democratic Front (CPP-NDF-NDF), has long been an important force in Philippine NGO politics. Since the late 1970s, the triumvirate has influenced existing NGOs, established new ones and used NGO funding to support its armed struggle. Yet, within the CPP itself, NGOs have also been a bitter source of tension, especially in the post-1992 "Reaffirm" Vs. "Reject" debate (see further below).

The CPP-NPA-NDF played a relatively minor role in NGO politics until the late 1970s. Under the Chairmanship of Jose Maria Sison, the CPP adhered to orthodox Marxist-Leninist-Mao Tse-Tung Thought (MLMTT). Broadening the anti-Marcos united front through the NDF was relegated in importance to strengthening the CPP's vanguard role and establishing the primacy of armed struggle, so the party itself paid little attention to legal front organisations.[75] Secondly, organisations such as CNL that could have established NGOs to strengthen the united front were in disarray in the early years of martial law as activists were arrested or fled to the mountains.[76]

Nevertheless, between 1972 and 1978, leading underground activists such as Ed de la Torre, Gerry Bulatao and Edgar Jopson helped establish important NGOs. With close

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[75] Emphasising his antipathy towards the national bourgeoisie, Sison, using a *nom de plume*, wrote in 1970 that "The correct policy is to unite with it only to the extent that it supports the revolution at a given time and at the same time to criticize it appropriately for its vacillations or tendency to betray the revolution" (Amado Guerrero, **Philippine Society and Revolution**, International Association of Filipino Patriots, 1979, pg. 161). On the NDF's ephemeral character see also, Jones, **Red Revolution...**, pp. 145-153, and William Chapman, **Inside the Philippine Revolution: The New Peoples Army and Its Struggle for Power**, W.W. Norton and Co., New York, 1987, pp. 214-233.

[76] Edicio de la Torre, interview, 17 August 1993.

church and social democrat connections, each brought ideas to the underground of institutions that could organise legitimately and secure foreign funding. Building on the successful *La Tondena* strike of October 1975, for example, Jopson, founder of the Church Labor Center, and other activists mobilized church-based NGOs, cementing ties with the NDF.[77] NGOs were thus, according to one former NDF leader, an idea that the CPP borrowed from the church.[78]

In 1978, serious tensions developed between the CPP and NDF activists following the arrest of Jose Maria Sison in November 1977. Even more hostile than Sison to the concept of a united front, new CPP Chairman Rodolfo Salas ordered a review of the Community Organising (CO) approach popularised by NASSA, and in the resultant paper presented to the Central Committee in January 1978, CO was roundly condemned:

> ...CO radicalism should read reformism...Its main concern is small events, small issues, small targets, tangible victories, small communities, small and manageable organisations etc. It goes around structural problems and deals with only their manifestations like poor water, light, health and recreational facilities. It builds issues around them, identifies personally responsible targets and concentrates agitation, mobilization and organisation on them. By avoiding real and substantial issues and targets and keeping people from revolutionary actions, CO objectively works only to amend some sick parts of the rotten totality. It evades as much as possible all problems which require armed struggle for their solution.[79]

Despite its unease however, the CPP was unable to enforce effective discipline, especially beyond Manila or Central Luzon were the leadership was largely concentrated. NDF activists enjoyed a significant degree of individual autonomy, and the number of NGOs and POs

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[77] Mila Aguilar, interview, 14 November. See also Benjamin Pimentel Jr., **EDJOP: The Unusual Journey of Edgar Jopson**, KEN Inc., Quezon City, 1989, pp. 152-156.

[78] Aguilar, interview.

[79] "Community Organisation: Reform or Revolution (A Critique of the CO Approach)", Peasant Section, January 1978. The paper acknowledged however that CO "has produced some tangible results and expressions"; eg. "CO experts and organisers have to a certain extent helped people to transcend the so-called 'culture of silence' and 'climate of fear' spawned by martial law".

established with their help grew rapidly in the late 1970s, especially in Mindanao.

By 1985, according to Chapman, the CPP's united front had become enormously successful:

> NDF organisers were active in at least one-fifth of the country's barrios...and in hundreds of them NDF Barrio Committees were the actual government. The penetration of labour unions and other non-communist organisations was proceeding swiftly even in Manila where grassroots work had been traditionally slow. Perhaps most significantly the party had in place the semblance of a true popular united-front in Bayan, especially in the cities of Mindanao and the Visayas...The front's own strategy of promoting people's strikes as the first stage of a national insurrection was becoming more and more popular.[80]

Behind this apparent success however, relations between the CPP and NDF progressively deteriorated between 1980 and 1986, soured by NDF draft programmes of January 1982 and January 1985 which sought to erode the CPP's vanguard role.[81] During the early 1980s, the CPP leadership expanded its effective authority beyond Luzon and the autonomy of NDF activists was significantly reduced. By 1986, according to Putzel, the NDF was "more of an idea or a political programme than an independent organisational reality",[82] and NDF barrio committees were, in reality, tightly-controlled CPP structures. The clampdown was, in many respects too late however, and NGOs established by NDF activists became an institutional base from which the CPP soon faced significant opposition.

CPP failure to give meaningful autonomy to the NDF fuelled the proliferation of NGOs after 1983. First, activists in sympathy with the NDF programme but frustrated by its organisational weakness used NGOs to bring organisational strength (and foreign funding) to their efforts. Disenchantment increased following the CPP's boycott of the 1986 Presidential

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[80] Chapman, **Inside the Philippine Revolution...**, pg. 232.

[81] See Joel Rocamora, "The NDF Program and the CPP Program for a People's Democratic Revolution: Umbilical Cord or Lifeline?", **Debate**, No. 5, December 1992.

[82] Putzel, **A Captive Land...**, pg. 168.

elections. Second, break-away national democrats regrouping under the new rubric of popular democracy used NGOs as a critical institutional base to launch a new tendency within the Philippine left. Third, activists associated with left-wing groups opposed to armed struggle (ie the social democrats, democratic socialists, and independent socialists) established their own NGOs in an attempt to create rival institutional power-bases of the left and to prevent their marginalisation by the underground left.

Between 1987 and 1990, the CPP's mass base eroded under the impact both of the government's intensive 1987-1990 counter-insurgency programme and its own strategic blunders. "From 1987 to 1990", the party admitted,

> the membership of the mass base was reduced by almost 60% from the base year of 1986,...the number of barrios covered by guerrilla fronts by 16% and ...Party membership by 15%...Furthermore, the number of officers and fighters of the people's army fell by 28% or below the level of 1985.[83]

As a result, the CPP came to rely increasingly on NGO funding from 1987.

Throughout the 1970s, the CPP derived barely enough income from NGOs to finance the United Front Commission. Under Rodolfo Salas's chairmanship, however, CPP finances were systematized.[84] According to one source, CPP cadres in NGOs began to submit funding proposals to overseas donors in "the latter part of the 70s",[85] and in 1980, according to another, regular "taxation" of NGOs was introduced.[86] By 1989, according to the Philippine military, 60% of an estimated US$6m-$9m received by Philippine NGOs from

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[83] "Reaffirm Our Basic Principles and Rectify Errors", Central Committee, Communist Party of the Philippine, July 1992, pg. 37. The document provides a revealing analysis of acknowledged strategic blunders, especially the concepts of "strategic-counter offensive" and "three strategic coordinations" originating from 1981 which in 1985 led, the document claims, to premature "urban insurrectionism" and "regularization" of the NPA's forces.

[84] Mila Aguilar, interview, 14 November 1993.

[85] Satur Ocampo, interview, 19 November 1993.

[86] Mila Aguilar, interview.

abroad was funnelled to the CPP/NPA.[87] This is a gross overestimate however. According to Clad, the CPP spent P22m (US$0.75m) in 1987 of which 60% came from "legal 'projects' ...including laundered businesses", and 22% from "'revolutionary taxation' including the confiscation of assets from 'reactionaries'".[88] Since the CPP derives income from NGOs in 2 main ways (levies on NGOs operating in CPP-controlled territory[89] and appropriations from a minority of directly-influenced NGOs), NGO income probably falls under these two categories. Assuming that NGOs accounted for 40% of 1987 CPP income, and projected 1988 income of P55m (US$1.9m),[90] it accounted for a tiny portion of overall foreign assistance channelled to Philippine NGOs, and an even smaller portion of total NGO income.

By the early 1990s however, this level of support had begun to decline. First, NGOs and other legal front organisations became increasingly resentful of CPP "taxation". Ka Mer, a leading CPP cadre in Bicol, notes that in 1989 the regional party was forced to reduce its

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[87] Pamela Balcena, "De Villa says some NGOs give aid to rebs", **Daily Globe**, 6 October 1989. NDF Spokesman Luis Jalandoni reportedly replied "Of course we are getting various forms of support from these NGOs that are sympathetic to our cause but it is not what [the military] would like to think that we are getting" (See Noli Cabantug, "NGOs are rebels' major source of overseas funding", **The Manila Chronicle**, 18 September 1989). Jalandoni's comments echo broader acknowledgment of CPP influence over NGOs and POs. In 1986, Urbana Cruz, reputedly a member of CPP Visayas Commission, claimed the CPP was involved in the drafting of the new constitution through legal front groups represented on the Constitutional Commission (Agence France Press report in the **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 24 June 1986). In 1987, the NDF's own publication acknowledged that foreign-funded health projects and organisations helped it increase its reach in rural areas (See **Liberation**, October-November 1987).

[88] James Clad, "Anatomy of a Red Revolution", **Far Eastern Economic Review**, 28 July 1988, pp. 12-14, citing captured CPP documents. The other sources listed were: donations from abroad 7%; and monies gained by CPP's Military Commission and Mindanao Commission 11%.

[89] In 1988, the CPP claimed a strong presence in 3,000 barangays and had infiltrated 4,800, giving it influence in 19% of the country's 41,000 barangays (Ibid). As of 1993, NGOs of all orientations routinely secured permission from local CPP commanders and paid levies to operate in CPP-influenced territory, a fact widely acknowledged in NGO circles, albeit anonymously and in hushed tones.

[90] Ibid.

revenue intake from legal organisations under pressure from NGO and PO staff.[91] Second, CPP internal splits led to further revenue falls. Following the reaffirmation of CPP orthodoxy at the Tenth Plenum of the Central Committee, public attacks on former leading cadre, and the July 1993 breakaway of the Manila-Rizal Committee,[92] NGOs and POs were drawn into a bitter dispute.[93] Legal organisations traditionally sympathetic to the CPP-NPA-NDF such as *Kilusang May Uno* (KMU, May First Movement) and *Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas* (KMP, Philippine Peasants Movement) fragmented into opposing camps, and "rejectionists" secured control of important bank accounts, reducing the revenue and assets of the "reaffirm" or orthodox camp.

Amid intense polemical debate within the CPP, CPP relations with legal front organisations and the very basis of NGO action were called into question. As former NDF Spokesperson Satur Ocampo explains:

> ...the [CPP] place[s] great emphasis on basic organising among ...workers...peasants and other sectors, mainly to develop these potential forces in support of the armed struggle. There is a very strong current within the party that discourages, if not outrightly opposes, organising for above

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[91] Quoted in James Putzel, "Managing the 'Motive Force': The Communist Party and the Peasantry", **Journal of Peasant Studies**, July 1995, forthcoming.

[92] For a concise chronological analysis of the split, see Christopher Collier, "Bringing Civil Society Back In: Rectification and the Idiom of Resistance in Davao", **South East Asia Research**, Vol. 3 No. 1, 1995. A more detailed analysis from an orthodox party perspective is set out in "General Review of Important Events and Decisions From 1981 to 1991", supplement to "Reaffirm Our Basic Principles...".

[93] Pitting "reaffirmists", supporters of decisions taken at the Tenth Party Plenum contained in "Reaffirm Our Basic Principles..." against "rejectionists", those opposed to orthodox MLMTT and the Chairmanship of Armando Liwanag (Jose Maria Sison). As of late 1993, the rejectionist camp was composed mainly of party members in Metro Manila and the Visayas. Prominent "rejectionists" include Romulo Kintanar, Benjamin de Vera, and Ricardo Reyes, former Mindanao Commission members implicated in the Mindanao "AHOS Campaign" of July-December 1985. During this campaign, "close to a thousand" party members ("Reaffirm Our...", pg. 33) were arrested, tortured, tried, and in unknown numbers, killed, in a search for government agents. Many of the victims worked for legal organisations in "white" areas and NGO activists numbered prominently among those killed (anonymous interviews).

> ground, for socio-economic programs, because of the probability that such activities, such organising and mobilizing among the people, would tend to deflect their interest and efforts in supporting the underground, particularly the armed struggle, and would be siphoned into what the movement refers to as reformist tendencies.[94]

Underlining this hostility, the CPP in "Reaffirm...", condemns Church NGO attempts to promote peace talks between the Ramos government and the NDF.[95] It also attacks party cadres on government wanted lists for endangering security by maintaining contact with "former political detainees ...personalities, organisations and institutions under probable and certain enemy surveillance", an explicit attack on links with prominent NGO activists.[96]

Despite these attacks, by late 1993, no significant NGO of national democratic orientation had fragmented or collapsed as a result of the split, evidence of a successful defence of institutional integrity.[97] Satur Ocampo, however, voiced the concern felt by many NGOs:

> I have always taken the position that the internal struggle should be resolved within the proper structures so that the spill over into the NGOs and open formations may be prevented from causing more damage. The argument put forward by the dominant side in the debate [however], the mainline party leaders, is...let the process run its course and then lets pick up the pieces later... Hopefully, reason and practical considerations and the overall consideration of what is good for the people and the progressive movement will prevail.[98]

Whatever the outcome, the dispute served to illustrate the complex ideological environment in which NGOs sympathetic to the national democratic perspective have traditionally worked.

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[94] Satur Ocampo, interview, 19 November 1993. See also Putzel, "Managing the 'Motive Force'".

[95] "Reaffirm Our Basic Principles...", pg. 61.

[96] Ibid, pg. 77.

[97] On events in 1994 however, see Chapter 6.

[98] Satur Ocampo, interview, 19 November 1993.

8. Arenas of Intervention.

Organising and sustaining POs and PO-NGO coalitions have become critical roles of Philippine NGOs. "As the heart of NGO work, mass-based organising is the lynchpin [sic] of all other...activities", Horacio Morales argues; "NGOs have increasingly engendered a heightened level of consciousness among peasants. Simultaneously, perhaps as a result, mass action has also been on the rise".[99] Another activist, Cesar Cala, agrees:

> [Since 1986]...NGOs...[increasingly] locate themselves...in new and less-ideologically encumbered areas of progressive discourse: development, peace and empowerment. From their initial single-concern or localized days, they have grown to tackle the larger issues of development...Through these efforts, NGOs have introduced a new frontline in progressive praxis in the Philippines. The groups in this frontline confront the question of powerlessness and strive for immediate impact and gains even while the conservative overhang of the state remains and continues to be struggled against.[100]

Two main factors explain the centrality of NGO mass-organising. The first is the transition from semi-feudalism to more capitalist-based relations of production and of social formation. Philippine society was predominantly rural in 1990-91, with 57% of the population living in rural areas. However, although agriculture, forestry and fisheries employed close to half the labour force, it accounted for only 22% of GNP.[101] Slowly, the relationship between land and economic power and in turn with political power is unravelling, enhancing scope for political participation by marginalised rural communities.[102]

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[99] Cesar Cala and Jo Dongail (Eds.), **A Call for Peoples Development: Selected Speeches 1986-'89 by Horacio "Boy" Morales**, National Council of Churches in the Philippines, Quezon City, 1990, pp. 124 & 127.

[100] Cesar Cala, "Synthesis: A Scan of Themes in Coalition-Building", in **Coalition Experiences...**, pg. 266.

[101] **Human Development Report 1993**, United Nations Development Programme, pp. 178 and 186, and Putzel, **A Captive Land...**, pg. 23.

[102] 145 of 199 members of the House of Representatives elected in May 1992 are members of families associated with the Philippines' traditional rural-based oligarchy, compared to 164 in the House elected in 1987 (Eric Gutierrez, **Ties That Bind: A Guide to Family, Business and Other Interests in the Ninth House of Representatives**, Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, Manila, 1994, pg. 4)

Nevertheless, rural elites remain a substantial economic and political force.[103] As Putzel notes, despite a horizontal diffusion of power within the elite (and within the state), "there has not been a vertical diffusion of economic and political power to the broader base of society".[104] Obstacles to reform resulting from this stand-off between traditional agrarian elites and the state have been an important stimulus to the increasingly political profile of NGOs.

Second, NGOs fill a vacuum left by the party political system. From 1946 to 1972, two parties dominated politics, the Nacionalistas and the Liberals. Both were characterized by minimal inter-party ideological debate, minimal intra-party solidarity, endemic inter-party switching for personal advancement and very narrowly-based party membership.[105] Thus, parties functioned as electoral vehicles for the interests of a small number of powerful families dependent on semi-feudal agriculture. But during the martial law period, profound social changes undermined the social structure on which the two-party system thrived. Agriculture declined in importance as industry and the service sector expanded. In response, the formerly homogenous economic interests of the elite[106] became more differentiated, with participation in or exclusion from the economic opportunities of martial law a critical cleavage. When martial law was lifted in 1981, new political parties were established. Again, their ideological basis was weak and they served mainly to advance the interests of prominent

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[103] See Gutierrez, **Ties That Bind...**, for instance, for details of the enduring power of rural-based elites in Congress.

[104] James Putzel, "A Fractured State in the Philippines: Clan Politics, the Military and the Left on the Eve of the 1992 Elections" paper delivered at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, 31 October 1991, pg. 6.

[105] See Carl Lande, **Leaders, Followers and Factions: The Structure of Philippine Politics**, Monograph Series No. 6, South East Asia Studies, Yale University, 1964, pg. 1.

[106] See Mark Turner, "National Level Elites in the Philippines 1945-1984: A Framework for Analysis", Occasional Paper No. 8, Centre for South-East Asian Studies, The University of Hull, 1984, pp. 6-9.

personalities or clan-machines. Political parties proliferated, some of them ephemeral, forming loose coalitions which lacked discipline or durability. Political parties failed to expand membership beyond the ranks of professional politicians, especially at the local level where parties had no permanent infrastructure, or to present issued-based manifestos with which the public could identify. Effectively the toys of the elite, parties remained by the early 1990s, the objects of profound popular cynicism.[107] As a result, NGOs and POs play an important role in mobilising and articulating the political demands of workers, peasants, marginalised sectors and sections of the middleclass traditionally estranged from the party political system.

Despite successes to date however, NGO strategy remains largely experimental and NGOs represent a far from coherent or autonomous force. According to Abad, NGOs must increasingly manage rather than ignite change and "consolidate further to become a respected force in the arena of politics...not only [by] closing our ranks but [by] establishing linkages with allies in...other sectors".[108] Since the late 1980s, Philippine NGOs have responded to this challenge, and in the following section, the main mechanisms through which NGOs participate in politics are assessed.

9. NGO Coalitions.

Given the prevalence of small, locally-based NGOs in the Philippines, the NGO

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[107] A common label for the leaders of the main political parties is "trapo", an acronym for "traditional politician" meaning "dirty rag" in Tagalog. Ramon Mitra, leader of the *Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino* (LDP), the largest "party" (in reality, a coalition of smaller *cliques*) was the popular epitome of the trapo, partly explaining his unexpectedly poor showing in the May 1992 Presidential elections.

[108] Florencio Abad, "Peoples Participation in Governance: Limits and Possibilities: The Philippine Case", in Ed Garcia, Julio Macuja and Benjamin Tolosa (Eds.), **Participation in Government: The Peoples Right**, Ateneo de Manila University Press, Quezon City, 1993, pg. 157.

community faced the threat of political marginalization following the collapse of the Marcos dictatorship in February 1986. Opposition to the Marcos regime provided a platform around which NGOs could unite and coalesce with other political forces, and with its collapse, important sectoral, ideological, regional and personality differences threatened to dominate. By the early 1990s however, the political prominence of NGOs had increased. NGOs consolidated and strengthened through a plethora of coalitions, especially through tertiary NGOs, secretariats that coalesced national and/or regional networks and their primary NGO/PO memberships. By 1993, according to one source, the Philippines had "the most organised and well-developed NGO community in the world".[109] The most important and elaborate NGO coalition formed was the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO), established in May 1990 by 10 of 13 national NGO networks (see Figure 4). By 1991, CODE-NGO had 1,500 primary NGOs,[110] and by July 1993, as regional networks joined, an estimated 3,500.[111]

CODE-NGO was formed for a number of reasons.[112] First, with the proliferation of "MUNGOs", mutant NGOs, many development NGOs "felt it necessary to...rescue the definition of non-governmental organisations from...being devalued and...to define the parameters of social development".[113] One of CODE-NGO's first successes was the approval in 1991 of a Covenant on Philippine Development, "a milestone in NGO efforts to

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[109] Canadian Embassy officials quoted in Goertzen, "NGOs take the lead...", pg. 20.

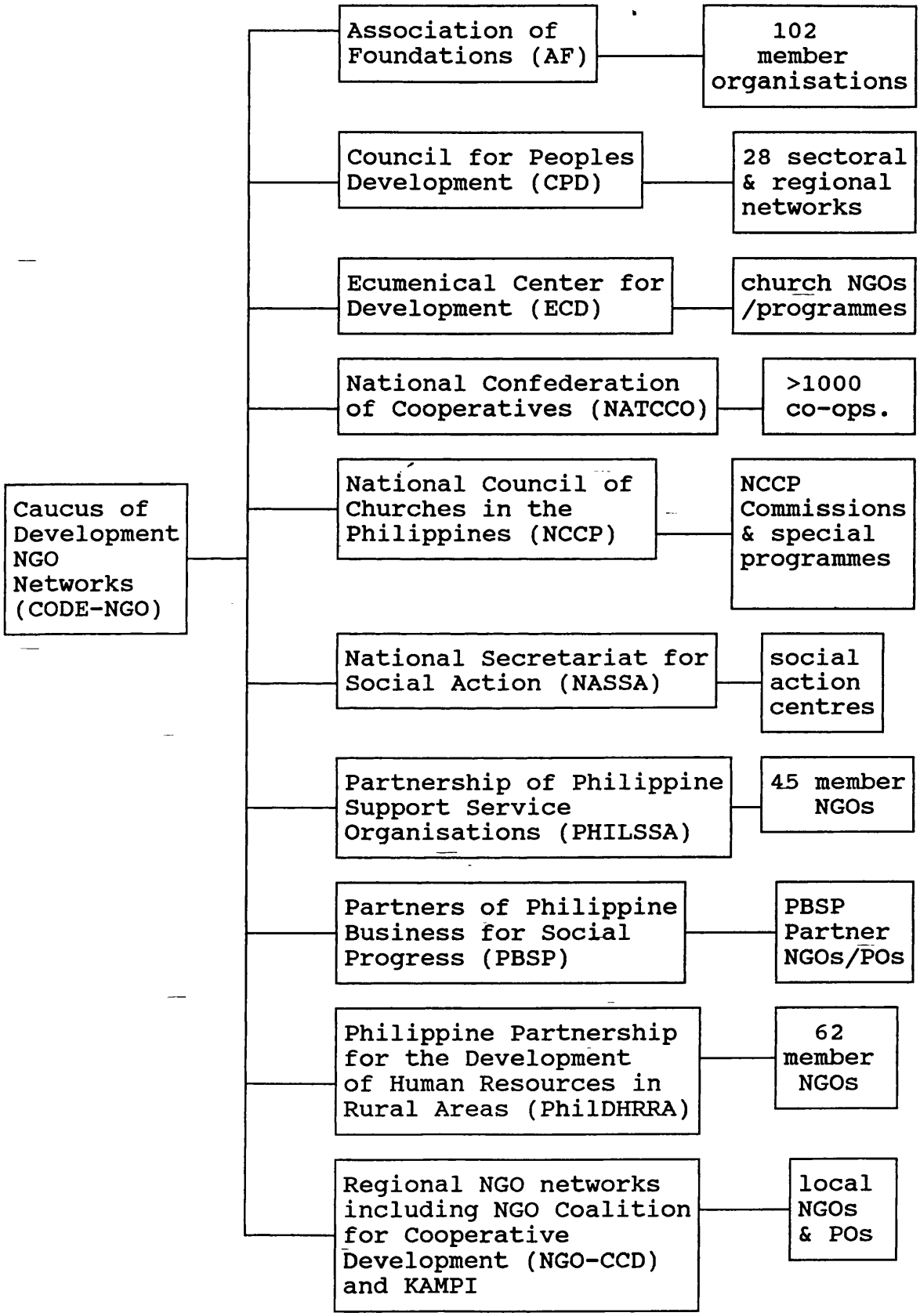
[110] Constantino-David, "The Philippine experience...", pg. 138.

[111] Marie Laisaso, Program Officer, CODE-NGO, interview, Manila, 8 November 1993.

[112] Only a few are covered here. For a broader overview, see Constantino-David, "The Philippine Experience..." and "The Need for Greater Unity" and Fernando Aldaba, "The CODE-NGO: Unifying the Development NGO Community", **Development NGO Journal**, (CODE-NGO), Vol. 1 No. 1, 1992, pp. 1-15, and "Caucus of Development NGO Networks" in **Coalition Experiences...**, pp. 23-37.

[113] Constantino-David, "The Need for Greater Unity...", pg. 9.

Figure 4
CODE-NGO Structure 1993



promote an alternative vision of Philippine development".[114] Second, NGOs felt increasingly threatened by governmental and donor attempts to influence NGOs programmes and sought greater autonomy through force of numbers and enhanced coordination. Similarly,ODA donors faced enormous difficulties in dealing with a fragmented NGO community and CODE-NGO became a forum through which Philippine NGOs could strengthen relationships with national government agencies, ODA donors, and foreign partners. Third, NGOs increasingly engaged in advocacy and campaigning after 1986 but as Aldaba notes, became disillusioned by unsuccessful campaigns on issues such as agrarian reform and increasingly aware of the need to act collectively.[115] Fourth, during the 1980s, many NGO networks effectively operated as ideological "transmission belts"[116] for left-wing groups (specifically, the *Bagong Alyansang Makabayan* (BAYAN, the New Nationalist Alliance), *Demokratikong Sosyalista Koalisyon* (DSK, Democratic Socialist Coalition) and *Bukluran sa Ikauunlad ng Sosyalista Isip at Gawa* (BISIG, Movement for the Advancement of Socialist Ideas and Action)).[117] While CODE-NGO's 10 national networks were mostly aligned with specific political positions, labels endemic to debate within the Philippine left were avoided and NGO distance from the "Reaffirm V Reject" and other intra-left debates was enhanced.

Other important NGO and PO coalitions were formed at the national level. As environmental NGOs proliferated after 1986, for instance, four environmental NGO coalitions were established; the Philippine Ecological Network (PEN), formed in 1988, and three

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[114] **The Covenant on Philippine Development: A Primer**, Council for People's Development, Manila, 1992, pg. 3.

[115] Aldaba, "Caucus of Development NGO Networks", pg. 28.

[116] The phrase comes from ibid.

[117] On the ideological underpinnings of, and tensions between, these groups, see James Goodno, **The Philippines: Land of Broken Promises**, Zed, London 1991, chapters 13-15.

launched in 1990, the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (SAC), the Philippine Environmental Action Network (PEAN), and Green Forum Philippines (GFP). Environmentalism is popularly regarded an issue that unifies both traditional and non-traditional activists, and despite problems with funding, leadership, low technical capacity and political strategy, GFP alone had 200 primary NGO members in mid-1992,[118] signalling growing unity and enhanced capability among environmental NGOs.

Other NGO coalitions were established at the regional level such as the Mindanao Coalition of Development NGOs (MINCODE). MINCODE was established in 1992-93 by 11 island-wide NGO networks.[119] Inspired by CODE-NGO, though not formally related, it sought to unify NGO responses to development planS for South Cotabato and the Cagayan-Iligan Industrial Corridor programme sponsored by the multilateral Philippine Aid Plan (PAP) consortium.[120] At the Mindanao NGO-PO Congress of July 1993, however, NGOs disagreed over a unified development agenda and were unable to mount a unified opposition campaign to the projects. Despite this failing, the Congress led NGO-PO consortia to prepare alternative economic development plans which NGOs and POs subsequently promoted in local government bodies and in election campaigns.[121]

10. Contemporary Social Movements.

Contemporary social movements in the Philippines represent a complex blend of

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[118] Eileen Legazpi, "Environmental Coalitions" in **Coalition Experiences...**, pp. 113-143.

[119] Billy de la Rosa, "Developing an Alternative Model: A Mindanao NGO Experience", paper delivered at the Philippine Resource Centre, London, 2 March 1994.

[120] Both important components of the 1993-1998 Medium Term Philippine Development Plan's objectives for Mindanao.

[121] Including the Alternate Forum for Research in Mindanao's (AFRIM) Basic Industrial Development Strategy (BIDS) 2010 plan, discussed in de la Rosa, "Developing an Alternative Model...".

institutional or organisational types, including trade unions, peasant associations, student groups and more recently, sectoral- or issue-based POs and NGOs. There are a number of general sociological reasons for the increasing role of coalitions, and of NGOs. First, class-based social movements have fragmented considerably in recent decades. From the 1930s to the early 1980s, class represented a central and straight-forward cleavage around which social movements were mobilized (eg. the Sakdalistas in the 1930s, the Huks in the 1950s (see Chapter 2)); political actors were either for or against a semi-feudal, semi-colonial system of export agriculture and the government apparatus which protected it. Through the 1980s and early 1990s however, social movements became increasingly focused, pursuing more concrete objectives, and more sectoral- or issue-specific agendas, drawing a narrower range of actors. Second, the archipelagic nature of the Philippines, the enduring cultural resonance of small affinity groups and the lack of a geographically-concentrated industrial sector all prevented the emergence of a mass party of the left.

Organisational factors however played an equally significant role. First, NGOs have access to significant ODA funding (multilateral, governmental and non-governmental) dwarfing resources mass organisations can derive from their own memberships.[122] Second, the well-resourced nature of the NGO sector makes it both a training ground and source of employment for the leaders and personnel needed to sustain social movements. Third, NGOs use direct experience in providing services as a springboard to more political activity since a history of effective service delivery enhances their "legitimacy" in the eyes of other political actors. Equally, direct experience informs NGO political activity which is therefore more clearly conceptualised, more thoroughly researched and documented and more clearly based

[122] PANDAYAN, for instance, a political formation associated with DSK, is reputedly 50% dependent financially on trade union support and 50% on NGOs and POs (anonymous interviews).

on practical realities. Fourth, while the notoriously-fractious tendencies of the Philippine left are increasingly willing to cooperate with each other, NGOs and NGO leaders acting as autonomous "honest brokers" are needed to generate and sustain momentum. Fifth, for the national democratic movement, NGOs continue to provide an important legal front through which to explore the post-1986 boundaries of "democratic space", albeit one which increasingly exercised its autonomy from party dictat.

Two of the most important multi-institutional, social movement-based, coalitions between 1986 and 1993 were the Congress for a Peoples Agrarian Reform (CPAR) and the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC). CPAR was launched in May 1987 in anticipation of an inevitable battle with a landlord-dominated Congress elected that month. Composed of 12 national peasant organisations/ coalitions, CPAR united a peasant sector long divided by ideological, territorial and regional disputes, and its broad political character represented a landmark in Philippine politics. NGOs such as PhilDHRRA, the Philippine Peasant Institute (PPI) & PRRM and NGO leaders such as Joel Rodriguez of Forum for Rural Concerns (FRC) & Corazon "Dinky" Juliano-Soliman of ACES played an important role in launching CPAR and in sustaining the unity to which it gave birth. In 1986, for instance, PhilDHRRA and the Centre for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (CENDHRRA) organised regional and national consultations which improved the climate for a major organisational initiative on land reform. As Grageda notes,

> Parallel efforts were also [initiated] by several other NGOs [including] FRC, PRRM, the Center for Community Services (CCS), Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF) and the Asian NGO coalition, which conducted consultations with their respective partner organisations. Church-based groups like the Urban-Rural Missionaries of the NCCP and NASSA were likewise involved.[123]

[123] Jose Grageda, "Congress for a People's Agrarian Reform" in **Coalition Experiences...**, pg. 66.

CPAR became an important actor in the national debate on land reform legislation. It drafted its own legislative programme, the Peoples Agrarian Reform Code (PARCODE), advocating essentially liberal measures[124] and campaigned for its adoption in Congress. PARCODE attracted significant support, including that of Rep. Bonificio Gillego, Chairman of the House Committee on Agrarian Reform and Rep. Florencio Abad (later appointed Secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform). In newspapers, PARCODE was debated with almost the same attention and vigour as the Congressional proposals, attracting unprecedented attention for an extra-parliamentary initiative. According to the 1987 constitution, a national referendum could be called by popular demand if supported by 10% of registered voters. CPAR therefore launched a popular petition seeking 2.5m signatures in support of PARCODE, the first initiative of its kind.[125]

The second great issue of national political debate in the late 1980s/early 1990s in which NGOs played a significant part was foreign debt. In 1988, total Philippine foreign debt amounted to US$28bn., equivalent to 10,000 pesos for every Filipino.[126] Interest payments on foreign debt of US$3.67bn. in 1989[127] consumed 17% of export earnings.[128] To coordinate public pressure on the government to adopt a tougher stance with international creditors, FDC was established in March 1988. Membership was drawn primarily from the main political blocs, yet FDC was viable because NGOs (including PRRM, and the Philippine

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[124] Ibid, pg. 276.

[125] NGO involvement in CPAR is also discussed in: Wegner, **Nicht-Regierungsorganisationen...**, pp. 242-257; Angelita Gregorio-Medal, "Development NGOs and the Democratization of Philippine Society", Ph.D. thesis, Faculty of Sociology, University of Bielefeld, Germany, May 1992, pp. 197-229; and James Putzel, **A Captive Land...**, pp. 217-219.

[126] Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo, **The Philippines: Debt and Poverty**, Oxfam, Oxford, 1991, pg. 2.

[127] Ibid.

[128] **World Development Report 1991**, World Bank and Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1991, pg. 250.

Center for Policy Studies) acted as brokers, helped with secretariat support, and undertook the research needed to make a complex issue accessible. As with CPAR, FDC leaders advised legislators while the media brought the campaign to a national audience. In March 1988, 90 NGO/PO leaders attended FDC's national Congress, again underlining a new degree of unity over a divided landscape.

CPAR and FDC failed to achieve their main objectives. The 1988 Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law was the very antithesis of PARCODE, while Congress refused to impose a debt cap and Philippine foreign debt was rescheduled on terms notably less favourable than those achieved by Latin American debtor nations. According to former KMP leader Jaime Tadeo, CPAR was too broad, and too far removed from the real frontline of peasant struggle.[129] Others felt FDC was similarly too broad:

> [FDC] should really have concentrated its efforts on Congress. Policy-making with respect to debt is fairly centralised, much more so than other policy issues such as labor or electricity. A broad base was not necessary to effect a policy change. A focus on Congress was also necessary because it was very much a battle between the Executive and Congress and ultimately Congress won.[130]

Yet, CPAR and FDC achieved specific results. FDC for instance launched a nationwide educational drive that increased popular interest in the debt debate and helped sustain a global anti-debt campaign that led the US government to introduce the Brady Plan.[131] Primary NGO/PO/Political bloc membership grew from 90 in 1988 to 250 in 1992 and three regional coalitions were established in Naga, Iloilo and Cebu cities.[132] CPAR

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[129] Jaime Tadeo, interview, London, 11 March 1994.

[130] Joseph Lim, Fellow, Philippine Center for Policy Studies, interview, Manila, 14 June 1993. See also Renato Velasco, "The Politics of Philippine Debt 1986-1990", Ph.D. thesis, College of Social Science and Philosophy, University of the Philippines, Quezon City, March 1992, pg. 152.

[131] Lim, ibid.

[132] Jose Grageda, "Freedom From Debt Coalition" in **Coalition Experiences...**, pp. 154-155.

meanwhile collected almost 1m signatures supporting a national referendum on agrarian reform, and in 1989, secured an increase in the government support price for rice, from P3.00 to P5.00 and then P6.00.[133] More importantly however, nationwide multi-tiered coalitions represented a major innovation in a country where legal mass movements have proved difficult to sustain on a nationwide basis.

Benedict Kerkvliet's seminal 1990 study of village-level politics in the Philippines documented everyday peasant resistance to prevalent patterns of authority, centred on status and class, counterpoised against a weakness that stemmed from a lack of opportunities to organise and to undermine these patterns.[134] By then, however, NGOs had become important intermediary institutions linking local-level struggles to national level debates.[135] Cala argues that "coalitions have been and will continue to be an important, if not the most important facet of Philippine progressive work"[136] and Tadeo agrees; "NGOs are very important if they carry the same political line and see their role as helping Peoples Organisations".[137]

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[133] Grageda, "Congress for a Peoples Agrarian Reform", pg. 72.

[134] Benedict Kerkvliet, **Everyday Politics in the Philippines: Class and Status Relations in a Central Luzon Village**, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1990.

[135] One interesting case-study for instance documents linkages between NGO/PO anti-mining campaigns in the Cordillera and the nascent national environmental movement. See Jessica Carino, "People's Organisations, Non-Government Organisations and Open-Pit Mining in the Cordillera", paper presented at the Fourth International Philippine Studies Conference, Australian National University, Canberra, 1-3 July 1992. The general nexus between local- and national-level NGO/PO environmental activism is analyzed in Broad with Cavanagh, **Plundering Paradise...**; and Marites Danguilan Vitug, **Power From The Forest: The Politics of Logging**, Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, Manila, 1993.

[136] Cala, "Synthesis: A Scan of Themes...", pg. 260.

[137] Jaime Tadeo, interview, London, 11 March 1994.

11. Local Government.

The passage of the Local Government Code (LGC)[138] in 1991 presented Philippine NGOs and POs with a dramatic opportunity to increase the scale and impact of their participation in politics. Arguably the most important piece of legislation passed during the Aquino presidency, the Code increases the local government share of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) from 11% to 40%, transfers over 70,000 civil service staff to Local Government Units (LGUs) and provides the private sector, especially NGOs and POs, with a major role in local government.[139]

The Code's passage provided NGOs and POs with acute dilemmas. First, many doubted whether local institutions had the capacity to absorb the functions devolved to them[140] and felt the code provided a licence for rampant graft and corruption. Local elites were expected to be the primary beneficiaries, using MUNGOs and private sector representative associations to marginalise "genuine" NGOs and POs.[141] Second, NGOs steeled by the years of resistance to authoritarian rule remained wary of the Aquino and Ramos administrations and viewed participation as a stamp of approval on democratic reforms instituted since 1986. Third, militant NGOs feared the confrontation with landlords,

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[138] Republic Act 7160.

[139] Alex Brillantes, "Redemocratization and Decentralization in the Philippines: Focus on the Increasing Role of Non-Governmental Organisations and the Local Government Code", paper presented to the International Association of Administrative Sciences conference, "Redesigning the State Profile for Social and Economic Change", Toluca, Mexico, 27-30 July 1993. See also Chapter 3.

[140] For a list of functions devolved, see Alex Brillantes, "Local Governments and NGOs in the Philippines: Development Issues and Challenges" paper presented to the Fourth International Philippine Studies Conference, Australian National University, Canberra, 1-3 July 1992, pg. 14 n6.

[141] See for instance Jessica Carino, "The Local Government Code of 1991 and Peoples Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations in Northern Luzon", Working Paper No. 20, Cordillera Studies Centre, University of the Philippines, Baguio, September 1992, especially pp. 23-24 and 34-39.

businessmen, military officials, politicians and bureaucrats to which their participation would inevitably lead in many parts of the country. To vent these tensions, to plan strategy and to maintain a unified position on the LGC, NGOs and POs formed another NGO coalition, the National Coordinating Council on Local Governance (NCC-LG). The NCC-LG was launched in December 1992 by 22 national NGO and PO networks,[142] and in October 1993 held a major conference in Bulacan with local government agencies to review the LGC's implementation.[143]

Evidence to date suggests that many of the expected problems have materialised, including faulty accreditation processes, resentment on the part of LGU officials at the involvement of NGOs and marginalization or exclusion of NGOs perceived as "political".[144] One major problem is that NGOs to the right-of-centre see the LGC as a potent weapon in undermining insurgency. The LGC "will definitely pull the rug under the insurgency" according to a quoted PBSP official; the newspaper concerned noted "The local government program appears to be part of USAID's [1992-1998] Democratic Pluralism Initiative".[145] As a result, many national democratic NGOs and POs are boycotting LGC structures. In

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[142] "Proceedings of the National NGO-PO Conference on Local Governance", 11-12 December 1992, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon, NCC-LG.

[143] "Working Papers of the LGU/GO-NGO/PO Conference on Partnership For Local Development", 12-13 October 1993, Malolos, Bulacan, Local Government Academy, League of Provinces, NCC-LG and the Department of Interior and Local Government.

[144] See **Operationalizing People Empowerment and the Local Government Code of 1991: Summary of Case Findings From Selected Local Government Units; A Preliminary Report**, Institute for Strategic and Development Studies, University of the Philippines, September 1993; and Crisandro Bruno and Luce Agnes Simeon, "NGO Accreditation in Baguio and Benguet", Issue Paper No. 6, Cordillera Studies Center, University of the Philippines, Baguio, March 1993.

[145] USAID's US$50m programme of support for the LGC, the Local Development Assistance Program (LDAP) (Carino, "The Local Government Code...", pg. 12), provided, the article noted, US$2.5m in grants towards PBSP's own LDAP which funds projects connected with the code. See Jo Calderon, "GO-NGO partnership: Growing Together?", **Today**, 7 February 1994.

Negros for instance, the NGO-PO coalition ARADO (the Agrarian Reform Alliance of Democratic Organisations) aims to "expose and oppose" features of the LGC such as Section 19 (dealing with immanent domain) and Section 20 (re. the reclassification of agricultural lands). ARADO is also protesting the failure to include farmers among the sectoral representatives in Negros Occidental's various sanggunian.[146]

On a more positive note, many NGOs see considerable opportunity, given the complementarity between LGU technical capabilities and NGOs/PO community organising strengths, matching services and peoples.[147] To date however, successful partnerships have only been established in a small number of areas, predominantly those with strong NGO-PO networks where ex-NGO or political activists occupy important local government positions. In Davao, for instance, NGOs have become an important force on the Davao City Development Council[148] and in Central Luzon NGOs and POs are active in the Regional Development Council.

12. Election Campaigns.

Party politics in the Philippines means effectively transactional politics, the politics of patronage and especially of election-time dole-outs. Election campaigns are expensive, an average P4m to P6m (US$140,000-210,000) for a seat in the House of Representatives and P10m-P20m ($350,000-710,000) for the Senate.[149] Most House or Senate members fall into

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[146] Ramon Consing, Para-Legal Officer, ARADO, interview, Bacolod, 1 November 1993.

[147] Rostum J. Bautista and Jorge Tigno, "Empowerment and Participation in Governance: NGOs and POs in Leyte and Samar" in **Operationalizing People Empowerment...**, pg. 12.

[148] National democrat organisations reputedly control 66% of the NGO/PO seats (anonymous interviews in Davao City and London).

[149] Interviews with anonymous Congressional sources.

debt during elections.[150] Congressmen expect a return on their investment and expect government to smoothen their paths in future election campaigns, reducing their appetites for significant opposition. Yet, given Filipinos' deeply ingrained faith in the electoral process, NGOs must participate in elections if they are to become a legitimate force for structural change. As Rivera notes, "...a strategy of building a broad, popular political coalition...must necessarily emphasize the various legal forms of struggle, with the electoral struggle as a special case".[151] Abad agrees: "NGOs cannot simply avoid politics or leave it in the hands of traditional politicians".[152]

Until the May 1992 elections (Presidential, Congressional and local), NGOs had little experience in projecting their growing political influence into the electoral arena. In the 1987 Congressional elections, a number of NGO and PO leaders, including PRRM's Horacio Morales, ran with *Partido ng Bayan (PnB, Peoples Party)*, but fared poorly. PnB's pro-national democratic campaign suffered from military and church opposition, a large part of the explanation for its defeat, yet PnB also suffered from prematurely launching a national campaign in a country where elections are won and lost at the local level. NGOs fared even more poorly in the local elections of 1988, largely because of violence that saw many NGO candidates killed, but also from the lack of campaign machinery.

By 1992, according to Abad, NGOs had matured "in size, expertise and political wisdom"[153] and, compared to 1987, were much better placed for electoral participation.

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[150] One reason why House members resent appointed sectoral representatives who have not had to finance expensive election campaigns.

[151] Temario C. Rivera, "The New World Order: Problems and Prospects for the People's Movements in the Philippines", in Carmencita Karagdag and Augusto Miclat Jr. (Eds.), **Beyond the Cold War: Philippine Perspectives on the Emerging World Order**, Peoples Training Program for Philippine NGOs et al., Quezon City, 1992, pg. 194.

[152] Abad, "People's Participation in Governance...", pg. 159.

[153] Ibid, pg. 155.

Progressive political formations such as BAYAN, BISIG and DSK had weak local machinery but expectations were high that NGOs could provide the infrastructure the left needed to make an electoral breakthrough. Abad noted five causes for optimism: 1. a relatively young electorate, with wide exposure to the media; 2. the prevalence of non-traditional groups, especially NGOs; 3. Church determination to counter terrorism, coercion and bribery; 4. previous successes by reform-oriented candidates; and 5. a decline in the utility of traditional mechanisms for voter registration.[154]

In the first organised and deliberate intervention in the electoral arena by NGOs, three political blocs, the Movement for Popular Democracy (MPD), BISIG and DSK, in alliance with supportive NGOs, formed AKBAYAN to merge two main NGO electoral coalitions: Project 1992, coordinated by MPD, and Project 2001, a DSK initiative with PANDAYAN as its main member. Running no candidates of its own, AKBAYAN supported the Liberal Party-*Partido Demokratikong Pilipino-Lakas ng Bayan* (LP-PDP-Laban) coalition at the national level,[155] including Jovito Salonga's candidacy for President and Aquilino Pimentel's for Vice-President. AKBAYAN support proved crucial to the LP-PDP-Laban ticket. Early in the election campaign, defections by Orly Mercado, Ernesto Maceda, and Teofisto Guingona and failed attempts to coalesce with Joseph Estrada's *Partido Masang Pilipino* led to a collapse in financial support from the business community for the LP-PDP-Laban slate. Without this support, LP-PDP-Laban would have been unable to finance its local

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[154] Ibid, pp. 159-160. Abad's optimism was also tempered with a caution that reflected broader sentiment: "The size and limited resources of NGOs makes them unlikely challengers of economic and political systems sustained by prevailing big government and oligarchic interests". See John McBeth, "A new people power: Voluntary bodies to play role in elections", **Far Eastern Economic Review**, 8 August 1991, pg. 22.

[155] On the formation of the alliance between AKBAYAN and LP-PDP-Laban, see Julio Macuja, "The Mass Movement and the 1992 Elections", Issue Paper No. 2, Cordillera Studies Center, University of the Philippines, Baguio, June 1992.

campaign but with NGO support it acquired a nation-wide machine with significant potential to mobilize voters and monitor election count centres. AKBAYAN also supported Florencio "Butch" Abad, a former member of the House of Representatives and former Secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform, who ran for the Senate as an NGO activist under the LP-PDP-Laban umbrella.

Despite expectations, AKBAYAN and LP-PDP-Laban fared poorly. Jovito Salonga won only 2.3m votes, 9% of votes cast, finishing sixth in the seven-way Presidential race. Compounding matters, Imelda Marcos finished fifth, a clear victory for the *trapos*, traditional politicians over *guapos*, the alternative, issue-based politics of AKBAYAN and LP-PDP-Laban.[156] In the race for the 24 seats in the Senate, "Butch" Abad finished 38th with 1.8m votes. But even Abad's vote couldn't be counted as an NGO vote, more an "NGO plus" vote, given his use of the Liberal Party's reputation and the coat-tails of Salonga and Pimentel.[157] Even at the local level, AKBAYAN fared poorly. Only 5 AKBAYAN-supported candidates won office as mayors: 3 MPD candidates and one each from BISIG and PANDAYAN.

A number of factors help explain AKBAYAN's poor performance.[158] First, it is still very difficult for NGOs to make an impact at the national level. They have minimal financial resources[159]; have few nationally-known personalities and find it difficult it replicate national-level coalitions at the local level. Second, NGOs were divided over forms of

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[156] *Guapo* is an acronym for genuine alternative politician and derives from the Tagalog for "handsome".

[157] Gerry Bulatao, interview, Manila, 13 August 1993. Bulatao served as one of Abad's main election campaign strategists.

[158] For an alternative, albeit rather vague, account of Akbayan's poor performance, see Olle Tornquist, "Democratic 'empowerment' and democratisation of politics: radical popular movements and the May 1992 Philippine elections", **Third World Quarterly**, Vol. 14 No. 3, 1993.

[159] Abad spent only P1.8m on his campaign, 1 peso for very vote received (Gerry Bulatao, interview, Manila, 13 August 1993). Salonga's campaign cost an estimated P65m, the bulk of which came from business sources (anonymous interview).

electoral intervention and over co-operation with rival left formations. Project 2001, for instance, was adopted as an official project of CODE-NGO but the breadth of political positions represented within the coalition ensured tension over levels of electoral intervention.[160] Within CODE-NGO, the Association of Foundations eschewed formal participation, others confined their activities to voter education and mobilization, while some, notably PhilDHRRA, intervened directly to support particular candidates. Third, AKBAYAN failed to establish a *modus vivendi* with the national democratic-aligned *Partido ng Bayan*, splitting left-wing ranks.[161] Fourth, NGOs and left formations alike waited until too late in the election campaign to launch their campaigns. Fifth, NGOs placed too much emphasis on the national level when their strengths (community mobilization, voter education and election count monitoring) were best deployed at the local level. Sixth, traditional patronage politics remained the dominant force in provincial campaigns, coopting many NGOs.[162]

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[160] Karina Constantino-David, Chairperson, CODE-NGO, interview, Manila, 29 April 1993.

[161] According to PnB, "The conduct of the organised forces during the election period showed that organised forces (people's organisations and NGOs) were disunited among themselves, and marginalized against the mainstream political forces. More contemptuously, PnB argued "When the day of reckoning came, the 'thousands upon thousands of NGOs' expected to deliver the Salonga votes were nowhere to be seen...The 'broadly-based NGO electoral movement' AKBAYAN counted on failed to deliver". Of a total of 17,260 positions contested (200 congressional seats, 73 for governors, 73 for vice-governors, 650 provincial board members, 60 city mayors, 60 city vice-mayors, 1,542 municipal mayors, 1,542 municipal vice-mayors, and 12,386 municipal councillors), PnB claimed a contribution in the winning ("actively supported rather than directly fielded") of 622, 3.6% of the total. See **Grassroots Electoral Politics: An Evaluation of the Electoral Performance of PnB and Allied Organisations in the 1987 and 1992 Elections**, Partido ng Bayan, April 1993, pp. 36, 42-43, and 52.

[162] On the enduring role of traditional patronage in elections, see John McBeth, "The Final Test...", **Far Eastern Economic Review**, 13 June 1991, pp. 33-34 and Roberto Tiglao and Rodney Tasker, "Fidel's Challenge...", **Far Eastern Economic Review**, 18 June 1992, pg 16. Suspicion that NGOs were used extensively to support established politicians during the May 1992 elections were fuelled in June 1993 when Rep. Ramon Bagatsing filed House Bill 9195 to amend the Omnibus Election Code of 1992. The bill sought to prohibit public officials awarding grants to NGOs within 45 days of elections ("Aid grant ban on NGOs sought", **The Manila Bulletin**, 4 June 1993, pg. 17).

In some parts of the country, NGO electoral participation met with some success. In Irosin, Sorsogon, according to George, NGO activists were elected as Mayor and Deputy Mayor while a slate of 8 NGO/PO activists won 7 seats on the local Municipal Council. Illustrating attempts by political parties to attract or co-opt NGO/PO support, and NGO/PO willingness to mix "traditional" with "alternative" politics, the slate received endorsement and funding from Lakas-NUCD, the Nationalist Peoples's Coalition and the Liberal Party.[163] In Cebu, 25% of NGOs surveyed by Uy-Etemadi joined Project 2001 while others supported the United Rural Sectors Electoral Coalition (URSEC) which remained outside AKBAYAN.[164] URSEC asked leading candidates to sign a social contract reflecting development NGO demands and on 1 May 1992, in one of the biggest election rallies held in Cebu City, Vicente de la Serna and Apolonio Abines Jr., LDP candidates for Governor and Vice-Governor, signed,[165] publicly tapping NGO support.[166] De la Serna and Abines were both elected and by mid-1993, URSEC members had met the new Governor to monitor the implementation of the contract.[167]

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[163] Terrence George, "People Power in the Provinces? NGOs and Politics After the Local Government Code's Promulgation", paper presented to 1994 meeting of the Association of Asian Studies, Boston, 24-27 March 1994.

[164] Uy-Etemadi, "NGOs in Cebu...", pg. 9.

[165] The URSEC contract contained many provisions in de la Serna's own planned Community Development Outreach Program, in areas such as medical facilities, livelihood projects and cooperatives development.

[166] Thomas Osmena's successful campaign to become Mayor of Cebu in January 1988 demonstrated the increasing importance of NGO/PO support and their increasing use by traditional elites in election campaigns. On Osmena's use of NGOs/POs before and after his election, see Resil Mojares, "The Dream Goes On and On: Three Generations of the Osmenas, 1906-1990", in Alfred McCoy (Ed.), **An Anarchy of Families: State and Family in the Philippines**, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1993, pp. 342 and 346 n32. Osmena was reelected Mayor in May 1992.

[167] By mid-1993, the Farmers Development Education Center (FARDEC), an URSEC member, had held a number of meetings with De la Serna and was happy with his adherence to the contract, particularly his commitment to the implementation of agrarian reform (Gigi Labrodores, Executive Director, FARDEC, interview, Cebu, 16 May 1993).

Overall, failure in the 1992 elections made NGOs more realistic about future electoral prospects. According to Bulatao, the alternative to traditional politics is not necessarily one that rejects traditional politics totally. Name recall, he argues, is important and NGOs need links with mainstream parties to avail of this ingredient. For future elections, Bulatao argues, greater territorial focus, a scaling down of national expectations and a political party distinct from NGOs (ie. a new NGO political project) are needed.[168] For Macuja, future priorities include sustained participation in local government structures, greater territorial focus and multi-sectoralism, and electoral training and "conscientization" among NGOs and POs.[169] Factors such as the continuing debility of the political party system, fragmentation among left-wing political blocs caused by the "reject" V "reaffirm" debate and the declining utility of traditional voter mobilization mechanisms, however, ensure a definite and important role for NGOs in future election campaigns. NGOs with a socio-economic focus tentatively welcomed the opportunity to participate in local politics, especially in influencing local development strategies, yet feared being marginalized by "MUNGOs", the proliferation of which the LGC would inevitably encourage.

13. Conclusion.

"In aristocratic societies", Alexis de Tocqueville first wrote in 1840,

> men do not need to combine in order to act because they are strongly held together. Every wealthy and powerful person constitutes the head of a permanent and compulsory association composed of all those who are dependent upon him or whom he makes subservient to the execution of his designs.[170]

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[168] Gerry Bulatao, interview, Manila, 13 August 1993.

[169] Macuja, "The Mass Movement...", pg. 20.

[170] Alexis de Tocqueville, **Democracy in America**, Volume II, Revised edition, P.F. Collier and Son, New York, 1900, pg. 115.

But in "democratic nations", de Tocqueville countered, "associations ought...to stand in lieu of those powerful private individuals whom the equality of condition has swept away".[171]

De Tocqueville's prescription echoes an important theme in contemporary Philippine political discourse. Growing "equality of condition", wrought by political reform and economic change, is sweeping "powerful individuals" away and NGOs have become important institutions in sustaining the process. Inevitably, vested interests fight for influence if not control over institutions which disrupt the status quo. In the Philippines, traditional politicians, landlords and businessmen opposed to structural reform use NGOs to advance their political agendas. In this sense, the associations that De Tocqueville sees as important instruments in undermining feudalism are also potent weapons in the hands of recalcitrant elites. In sections 3-7, this chapter described a range of forces that have stimulated the proliferation and growth of NGOs, each interacting, sometimes supporting sometimes opposing each other. For the NGO community as a whole, development assistance has been the most influential source, helping established NGOs to consolidate and expand their programmes but also injecting resources that are eagerly sought by other political forces. For development NGOs, or Constantino-David's "DJANGOs", the underground left was the most important influence, even in the establishment of church-based NGOs, and remains an important force despite the CPP split. The Philippine NGO community is extraordinarily heterogeneous and as Sections 2 & 3 discussed, characterised by distinct cleavages: between NGOs and POs, between different types of NGOs, and between different levels in a complex hierarchy. Sections 8-12 discussed the main political intervention mechanisms used by NGOs to participate in politics, especially those used by "DJANGOs", the primary focus of the

[171] Ibid, pg. 117.

research. Fuelled by a rapid expansion in numbers and government incentives, the NGO community has been propelled to political prominence, only acquiring the pivotal role suggested by De Tocqueville after 1986. The NGO community is now an important arena in which political forces contest for influence and resources. Sections 8-12 however illustrated some of the more particular arenas in which NGOs contest for resources and influence.

As chapters 2 & 3 argued, the state plays a critical role in defining the context in which NGOs can elaborate their own political role. The consolidation or institutionalization of "civil society" essentially involves the state making areas of society beyond its control increasingly subject to rules. But as chapter 4 discusses, DJANGOs also contend with a complex political environment shaped by actors *beyond the state*, complicating attempts to promote popular empowerment. That context represents a vital backdrop to the heart of the research set out in the following chapters, a study of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement and Task Force Detainees of the Philippines as political actors.

CHAPTER FIVE: The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement.

1. Introduction

For analysis of NGO political roles and politics, readers must turn to mainstream NGO, rather than political science, literature, partly, as Chapter 1 noted, because political scientists have been slow to treat NGOs as significant political actors. The socio-economic thrust to the NGO literature, however, has meant that economic strengths and weaknesses of NGOs have overshadowed their political impact. Similarly, concern with participation has meant that the role of NGOs in mobilizing beneficiary communities has been highlighted at the expense of a more complex range of political interventions. Third, focus on links between "Northern" and "Southern" NGOs has underscored their influence in multilateral fora, overshadowing their influence in national politics.

In a review of the dominant literature, Sanyal argues that "the political impact of bottom-up [NGO] projects has been...less striking than their economic impact".[1] As solidarity groups, Sanyal argues, NGOs and POs have largely failed in pressuring local elites or local government. Their main success has been to enforce discipline and compliance among beneficiaries or members, especially in the repayment of credit. Sanyal lists a number of reasons for this putative failure. First, NGOs needed elite support but in reality elites have proved adept at manipulating NGO programmes for their own benefit. Second, NGOs lacked the wider institutional linkages (with political parties, government etc.) needed to confront local elites. Third, because of competition for donor funds, NGOs were unable to cooperate

[1] Bishwapriya Sanyal, **Cooperative autonomy: The Dialectic of State-NGOs relationship in developing countries**, [sic], Research Series 100, International Labour Organisation, Geneva, 1994, pg. 40.

with each other, or form institutional linkages among themselves.[2]

Lacunae in Sanyal's arguments and in the broader literature are best illustrated with respect to individual NGOs and Chapters 5 and 6 provide detailed case-studies of two of the Philippines' leading NGOs. The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM), the focus of this chapter, is the second largest NGO in the Philippines and the largest primary NGO committed to rural development. Founded in 1952, it is also one of the Philippines' oldest rural development NGOs, and its rich political history illustrates the essentially political character of NGO action.

The economic and political fortunes of prominent NGOs in the developing world are dependent on trends in national politics as much as on support from foreign donors. First, particular regimes exert great influence in promoting or retarding the development of NGOs. PRRM's fortunes closely mirror developments in Philippine politics over four decades, rising with President Ramon Magsaysay's inauguration in January 1954, falling with the declaration of martial law in September 1972 and rising again with the collapse of the Marcos dictatorship in February 1986. Second, the political fortunes of individual NGOs are significantly influenced by institutional forces. Like many of the developing world's leading NGOs, PRRM's success at particular stages in its history correlates closely with the involvement of highly dynamic individuals with significant leadership skills. Elite philanthropists, foreign donors and the underground left have been important influences on PRRM strategy and PRRM's political strengths and weaknesses stem in large part from the need to reconcile the competing political objectives of each. Third, the ability of NGOs to influence elites, government agencies etc. and to advance their political agendas or those of beneficiary POs or communities depends on the particular means by which NGOs participate

[2] Ibid, pp. 40-41.

in politics. This chapter examines PRRM's role in Philippine politics.

2. PRRM 1952-1986

PRRM's early history is inextricably bound up with the history of the Chinese Mass Education Movement (MEM), and its founder, Dr. Yang-Chu (Y.C.) James Yen. Born in Szechuan province in 1897, the son of a Protestant pastor, Yen graduated from Yale University in 1918 as a medical doctor and travelled to France to work with Chinese labourers. Appalled at their illiteracy, Yen reduced the complex character-set of classical Chinese to 1,000 characters, organised literacy classes, and established a newspaper, *The Chinese Worker,* based on the new character-set.[3] Returning to China, Yen established the Mass Education Movement in 1923 to popularise his innovative teaching methods.

In 1929, Yen established a "social laboratory" at Ting Hsien in Hopei province to pioneer broad approaches to rural development. Schools were built and experimental agricultural production centres constructed on donated land. Health workers were trained in conjunction with the Department of Public Health. Other organisations were also established, including Self-Help Societies, Village Cooperatives, Integrated Cooperative Societies and Farmers' Institutes. Based on experience at Ting Hsien, Yen popularised a four-fold approach to challenge the "fundamental weaknesses of Chinese life": livelihood to combat poverty, education to combat ignorance, health to combat disease, and self-government to combat civic disintegration.[4]

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[3] Robert Bartlett, "Yang-Chu James Yen", in John C.K. Kiang (Ed.), **Dr. Y.C. James Yen: His Movement For Mass Education and Rural Reconstruction**, South Bend, Indiana, 1976, pg. 4.

[4] Y.C. James Yen, **The Ting Hsien Experiment**, Chinese National Association of the Mass Education Movement, Peiping, 1934, pg. 5. Developed by Chen Chu-san, Head of the MEM's Department of Citizen Training, and Kan Nai-kwang, Vice-Minister of Interior, the self-government thrust only evolved from 1932. See Pearl S. Buck, **Tell the People: Talks**

During World War II, Japanese forces closed Yen's schools and the MEM never recovered. In 1948, Yen became a Commissioner of the newly established and US-funded Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction (JCRR), and moved to Taiwan in 1949 with the JCRR following the collapse of the *Kuomintang* regime.[5] Yen resigned from the JCRR in 1950 and, with the support of American friends, established the International Mass Education Movement (IMEM) in New York in 1951. In February 1952, he embarked on a tour of Asian countries including the Philippines, seeking a base for a new movement.[6]

Yen was invited to the Philippines by a group of prominent philantrophists led by Dean Conrado Benitez, a University of the Philippines educationalist. Touring the country, he was accompanied by Senator Tomas Cabili, prominent Chinese banker Dr. Albino Sycip and Manuel Manahan, publisher of the Tagalog daily *Bagong Buhay*.[7] Back in New York, Yen recommended the Philippines to the IMEM board, but was opposed by others who favoured India.[8] According to Yen, the decisive factor in favour of the Philippines was "the presence of a small but influential group of public-spirited civic leaders who have a profound concern for the sad plight of their peasant countrymen".[9] A more probable explanation,

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with James Yen About the Mass Education Movement, John Day, New York, 1945, pp. 60-63.

[5] Joseph Yager, **Transforming Agriculture in Taiwan: The Experience of the Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction,** Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1988, Chapter 1.

[6] James B. Mayfield, **Go To The People: Releasing the Rural Poor through the Peoples School System**, Kumarian Press, West Hartford CT, 1985, pg. 29. Earlier, Yen helped establish a Board for mass education and social reconstruction in Cuba (See Pearl Buck, **Tell The People: Conversations with James Yen about the Mass Education Movement**, John Day, New York, 1945, pg. 15).

[7] Manuel Manahan, "Dr. James Yen: Crusader for the Common Man", Sunday Times (the magazine of **The Manila Times**), 18 June 1972, reprinted in Kiang, **Dr. Y.C. James Yen...**, pg. 167.

[8] Goturi N. Reddi, "Gandhi and Yen: Guiding Principles of the Indian Rural Reconstruction Movement", **Rural Reconstruction Review**, IIRR, Vol. V. 1983, pg. 28.

[9] Y.C. James Yen, "International Institute of Rural Reconstruction and Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement" in Harry Bayard Price (Ed.), **Rural Reconstruction and**

however, was that the Philippines, like pre-revolutionary China, was racked by rural insurgency and that US support for the counterinsurgency campaign of the Quirino government increased the likelihood of securing official US funding.

Amid inauspicious beginnings, PRRM's incorporation papers were signed on 17 July 1952 by a cross-section of Manila's political, philanthropic and business elite.[10] Its first base was a single table in the office of Benitez and Co. in downtown Manila (moving soon after to free accommodation in the Social Welfare Administration) and during 1952, it raised only P13,700 pesos, mostly from its original incorporators and trustees.[11] Because of weak finances, PRRM was unable to maximise the interest aroused by Yen's speaking tour, and could only recruit 200 students to train as Rural Reconstruction Workers (RRWs). During the first six months training course, 127 quit, and of those who finished, only 24 agreed to work for the first year without pay.[12]

With the inauguration of President Ramon Magsaysay in January 1954 however, PRRM's fortunes changed. Echoing Yen's work in Ting Hsien, PRRM chose Nueva Ecija and the neighbouring province of Rizal as a "social laboratory" in which to develop Yen's four-fold programme, the former, according to PRRM, because it was "the most communist-

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Development: A Manual for Field Workers, Fredrick A. Praeger Inc., New York, 1967, pg. 20.

[10] The incorporators were: Cecilio Putong (Education Secretary); Juan Salcedo Jr. (Health Secretary); Senator Estaban Abada; Congressman Eulogio Rodriguez Jr.; Roland Rene (Philippine Director of the US Foreign Operations Administration); Jose Cojuangco; Conrado Benitez; Albino Sycip; Oscar Arellano (President, Philippine Jaycees); and Jose S. Camus (Agriculture and Natural Resources Under-Secretary) (**PRRM In Its Silver Year**, Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, Nieves, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija, 1977, pg. 6).

[11] Ibid. The P13,700 included 6 donations of P1,000 each from: Araneta Gregorio Inc.; China Banking Corporation; Vicente Go Chien; Philippine Bank of Communications; Philippine Manufacturing Company; Yutivo Sons Hardware.

[12] **The PRRM Story 1952-1965**, Philippines Rural Reconstruction Movement, Nieves San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija, 1965.

infested [province] in the country".[13] PRRM had close ties to the new administration. Its main political strategist, Sen. Tomas Cabili, was a key Magsaysay supporter and Manuel Manahan, who had been impressed by Yen's speaking tour, served initially as Chairman of Magsaysay's pet project, the Presidential Complaints and Action Committee (PCAC).

Magsaysay was initially sceptical of PRRM, viewing it as a threat to his planned Community Development Planning Council (CPDC)[14] and he had previously chided Yen that educated youths would never work without pay in rural barrios.[15] On 5 April 1954 however, Magsaysay attended PRRM's first RRW "graduation" ceremony at Guimba, Nueva Ecija. Impressed with Yen's work, Magsaysay invited PRRM to develop the pivotal San Luis *Katubusan* (Redemption) project.[16] In Executive Order 36 of 1954, Magsaysay created the San Luis Project Committee, naming PRRM's Executive Director, Ric Labez, as Chairman.

The San Luis project originated in a letter to PCAC Chairman Manahan from Huk leader Luis Taruc soon after Magsaysay's inauguration, probing Magsaysay's intentions.[17] Mandated by Magsaysay and accompanied by cub reporter Benigno Aquino Jr., Manahan met with Taruc, initiating negotiations leading to Taruc's controversial "surrender" on 17 May 1954.[18] San Luis, Pampanga, nestled on the slopes of Mt. Arayat, and centred on Luis Taruc's home barrio, Santa Monica, lay deserted following military counterinsurgency

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[13] Ibid. In contrast, **The Philippine Herald** of 2 September 1952 lauded PRRM for its apolitical origins and objectives: "[PRRM is]...not part or projection of the United States MSA [Mutual Security Agency] efforts in the Philippines, a particular class of citizens or any religious group...The PRRM has excellent motives...with distinguished citizens for its organizers and incorporators who have no political motives".

[14] Jose V. Abueva, **Ramon Magsaysay: A Political Biography**, Solidaridad Publishing House, Manila, 1971, pg. 362.

[15] Manahan, "Dr. James Yen: Crusader...", pg. 170.

[16] **The PRRM Story 1952-1965**.

[17] Manahan, " Dr. James Yen: Crusader...", pg 172.

[18] Aquino's account of Taruc's surrender differs from Manahan's on several points. See Nick Joaquin, **The Aquinos of Tarlac: An Essay On History As Three Generations**, Cachos Hermanos Inc., Manila, 1988, pp. 238-247.

operations. After the army had supervised the reoccupation of San Luis, 8 PRRM RRWs reactivated the San Luis FACOMA (Farmers Cooperative Marketing Association), provided loans to 300 farmers, distributed seeds and seedlings and established plant nurseries.[19] In June 1955, the project was pronounced a glorious success by the national media.[20] Established primarily to demonstrate Magsaysay's *bona fides* to Taruc, the project played an important, if symbolic role, in ending the Huk insurgency.[21] According to Manahan, PRRM played a key role:

> President Magsaysay's program of tenancy, coupled with Dr. Yen's rural reconstruction, worked so effectively that within 7 months [of Magsaysay's inauguration], Luis Taruc was convinced of the President's sincere desire to help the masses and... came down from his lair in Mt. Arayat.[22]

Within PRRM however, the close identification with San Luis led to tension. Ric Labez differed with Yen over the latter's emphasis on politically sensitive barrios or those favoured by Magsaysay,[23] and two years later, PRRM withdrew from the project.[24]

Despite San Luis however, PRRM's future was far from secure. In 1953, PRRM generated income of P64,385 but was still dependent on a small circle of elite benefactors. After Magsaysay succeeded Quirino as President in 1954, PRRM sought official funding from Philippine and American sources. Cabili and Yen encouraged the establishment of a joint Philippine-American Presidential Action Committee on Rural Reconstruction, securing

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[19] **PRRM In Its Silver Year**, pg. 15.

[20] Glowing tributes from **The Evening News, The Manila Bulletin** and **The Manila Times**, all of 13 June 1955, are cited in **The PRRM Story 1952-1965.**

[21] See also Horacio Morales, "The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement: A Case in Reviving and Transforming a Non-Government Development Organisation" in Cesar Cala and Jo Dongail (Eds.), **A Call For People's Development: Selected Speeches from 1986-1989 by Horacio "Boy" Morales Jr.**, National Council of Churches in the Philippines, Quezon City, 1990, pg. 144.

[22] Manahan, "Dr. James Yen: Crusader...", pg. 173.

[23] Horacio Morales, interview, Manila, 2 August 1993, recalling discussions with Labez before the latter's death.

[24] **The PRRM Story 1952-1965.**

Magsaysay's endorsement. In an amended plan, Abueva notes, the US House of Representatives called for the establishment of a Joint Commission on Rural Development (JCRD), but the plan fell through.[25] With the decline in insurgency, donations from landlords and businessmen collapsed and PRRM's income fell cumulatively to P45,713 in 1954, P44,770 in 1955 and P32,170 in 1956.

Despite financial uncertainty, the 1950s were successful years for PRRM. Under the direction of Sen. Tomas Cabili, Congress approved Republic Act 1245 on 10 June 1955. Known popularly as the Barrio Council Law, it provided for the direct election of barrio council leaders. Councillors for health, education and livelihood were also included, mirroring other planks in the PRRM programme.[26] The law was expanded in 1958 in Republic Act 2370, the Barrio Charter Law, steered through Congress by newly elected Senator, Manuel Manahan. Again modelled on PRRM's self-government programme, the Act gave barrios similar powers to municipal corporations including the right to raise taxes, borrow money, initiate public works and organise agricultural, industrial or commercial cooperatives.[27] In another endorsement of PRRM's programme, a new government agency, the Presidential Assistant on Community Development (PACD, later renamed the Presidential Arm on Community Development) was established in succession to the ill-fated CDPC. Despite Magsaysay's antipathy to training barrio workers along PRRM lines, the PACD

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[25] Abueva, **Ramon Magsaysay...**, pp. 362-363. According to Abueva, Magsaysay opposed the planned inclusion of two American commissioners in the JCRD while US officials in Manila opposed the JCRD because it would divert funding from established channels.

[26] Juan Flavier, **Doctor To The Barrios**, New Day Publishers, Manila, 1970, pg. 182. The law echoed Chiang Kai-shek's decision in 1939 to adopt the MEM's Ting Hsien model of village government in all *hsien* (counties) (See Buck, **Tell The People..**, pg. 79).

[27] **PRRM In Its Silver Year**, pg. 9. In 1960, President Carlos Garcia presented a "Presidential Award of Merit" to PRRM for its "silent but glorious revolution". The citation noted that PRRM's work in Nueva Ecija, Rizal and Pampanga had led to the enactment of RA1245, amended in RA2370 (**The PRRM Story 1952-1965**).

adopted the PRRM model and in April 1956, 220 community development trainees, 50 agriculturists and 67 home demonstrators embarked on PACD's first training course.[28]

Local government legislation proved a major fillip to PRRM's activities. With the help of teams of 8 to 10 RRWs in each test barrio, residents were mobilized through Rural Reconstruction Mens Associations (RRMAs) that implemented agricultural and livelihood projects, Rural Reconstruction Womens Associations (RRWAs) that managed health programmes, and Rural Reconstruction Youth Associations (RRYAs) that promoted education and citizenship programs.[29] Residents organised barrio farmers seminars and workshops; extension farms and plant nurseries; co-operative credit societies; barrio clinics; literacy classes and barrio schools and overall policy-making was coordinated by Barrio Councils funded by PRRM in its pilot barrios. By 1960, PRRM was active in about 100 barrios, mostly in Central Luzon[30] and RRMA, RRWA and RRYA federations had a combined membership of roughly 18,000.[31]

Yet despite this putative success, problems were already apparent, according to Villanueva. First, despite PRRM's commitment to Yen's "Release, Not Relief" philosophy, barrio sponsorship, PRRM's main fundraising device, promoted dependency in assisted barrios. Second, PRRM's programme was excessively project-oriented, with tangible projects falsely equated with success. Third, projects aimed to secure individual or family benefit, weakening attempts to forge collective identities and widen the interests of barrio residents.

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[28] Abueva, **Ramon Magsaysay...**, pg. 369. Senator Emmanuel Palaez, a confidant of Yen's and PRRM supporter, played a key role in evincing Magsaysay's change of mind. Palaez also played a key role in the passage of the 1958 Barrio Charter Law.

[29] Morales, "The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement...", pg. 145.

[30] Buenaventura M. Villanueva, **The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement**, Community Development Research Council Special Studies Series No. 9, University of the Philippines, Quezon City, 1961, pg. 118.

[31] Mayfield, **Go To The People...**, pg. 35.

Fourth, expenditure on salaries, transport and supplies led to high administrative costs (an estimated 20% of total operations), undermining project viability. Fifth, because of a rigid and uniform programme that ignored local contexts, beneficiaries often failed to empathise with PRRM projects.[32]

These specific problems were closely related to political characteristics of PRRM's *modus operandi*. First, although RRWs represented the views of RRMA, RRWA and RRYA members within PRRM, policy-making was extraordinarily elitist. Financially, the IMEM helped PRRM significantly, donating one US dollar for every peso raised in the late 1950s, and providing the bulk of the funding for PRRMs National Training Institute and new headquarters, opened in Nueva Ecija in 1957. Similarly, the International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (IIRR), established in Cavite in 1960 to launch Rural Reconstruction Movements throughout the developing world, provided funding in the late 1960s along with the Asia Foundation, CARE, *MISEREOR* and the *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung*. Nevertheless, funding remained dependent on a small cross-section of the country's banking, industrial, commercial and landowning elite, both Filipino and foreign. In turn, membership of the Board of Trustees was determined by financial contributions rather than professional expertise in community development. Table 5 for instance shows that between 1968 and 1970, trustees generated over 10% of PRRM's total income, with one trustee alone (Jose Ma. Soriano) generating over 3%.[33]

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[32] See Villanueva, **The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement**, pp. 125 & 91; 118; 124; 127 & Appendix C; and 126.

[33] PRRM income for the three years 1968-1970 is not available. Using income for the year to 31 December 1971 of P934,800 however, calculations assume total income of P2.7m for the three-year period, ie. P346,771 = 12.8% of P2.7m.

Figure 5

List of Cash Contributions From January 1, 1968 to November 30, 1970 (Pesos).

1. Board of Trustees		
A. Dean Conrado Benitez		
Supreme Council of Free Masonry of the Republic of the Philippines	2000	
Faculty Club of the Philippine Womens University	120	2120
B. Hon. Gregorio M. Feliciano		
Dept. of Social Welfare		1100
C. Mr. Antonio F. Gonzalez		
FGU Insurance Company	2700	
Insular Life Insurance Company	5300	8000
D. Mr. Derek Holdsworth		
Philippine Refining Company		17000
E. Mr. Lucio Mazzei		
Shell Co. of the Philippines		52000
F. Mr. Aurelio Montinola		
Amon Trading Corporation	14510	
Republic Cement Company	5000	
Personal	8740	28250
G. Mr. W. G. Petty		
Procter and Gamble PMC		10000
H. Mr. George W. Potts		
Bataan Refining Corporation	7600	
Esso Philippines Inc.	4000	11600
I. Mr. Ramon V. del Rosario		
Bacnotan Cement Industries	15200	
Filoil Refinery Corporation	11400	
Filoil Marketing Corporation	5000	31600
J. Don Jose Ma. Soriano		
Atlas Consolidated Mining Corp.	7600	
Atlas Fertilizer Corporation	2540	
Bislig Bay Lumber Company	51350	
Paper Industries Corporation of the Philippines	35000	
Phelps Dodge Copper Products of the Philippines	2530	
Rheem of the Philippines Inc.	2530	101550
K. Don Albino Sycip		
China Banking Corporation		30350

L. Mr. Leonides Virata		
Phil-Am Life Insurance Company	450	
Personal	100	550
M. Mr. J.J. Wolahan		
Caltex Philippines		52541
Total		P346771

Other Big Donors:

Corso, New Zealand	51473
Central Bank of the Philippines	25000
Office of the President of the Philippines	100000
Total	176473

Source: PRRM archives.

Trustees and others often used PRRM in pursuit of private interests. In Toledo, Cebu, for instance, the Soriano-owned Atlas Consolidated Mining Co. contracted PRRM to supervise the construction of 3,000 homes for employees. PRRM also supervised a housing project for another Soriano-owned company, the Bislig Bay Lumber Co. in Baler, Quezon.[34] More infamously, Benigno Aquino brought PRRM into Hacienda Luisita soon after it was purchased by his inlaws, the Cojuangcos, to quell unrest generated by Huks.[35] Reinforcing its elite character, PRRM maintained close ties with government, through its Council of Governors[36] a close working relationship with the Social Welfare Administration and informal contacts through its well-connected trustees. Former Commerce and Industry Secretary Cornelio Balmaceda, PRRM President 1957-1962, became Chairman of the

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[34] Minutes of the PRRM Joint Board and Finance Committee Meeting, 15 July 1966.

[35] By Aquino's own admission, PRRM's work on Hacienda Luisita was a "palliative". See Joaquin, **The Aquinos of Tarlac...**, pg. 275.

[36] In 1965, for instance, the Council of Governors' 39 members included the Vice-President, 6 cabinet members, 14 Senators, 7 members of the House of Representatives and 3 provincial governors (**The PRRM Story 1952-1965**).

National Economic Coordination Office in the Macapagal administration while his successor, Dr. Amando Dalisay, previously Executive Director of the National Economic Council became Agriculture and Natural Resources Under-Secretary. Dalisay's successor as PRRM President, Gregorio Feliciano, joined the Marcos government as Social Welfare Administrator in 1967.[37]

A second major characteristic of PRRM's political orientation was a close identification with government, especially counter-insurgency, policy. PRRM collaborated with the AFP in civic action activities in the early 1960s, and began training US Peace Corps volunteers in 1960. In 1964, it began training AFP civic action teams at Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija and Camp Aquino in Tarlac,[38] and, from 1965, at its Nueva Ecija headquarters.[39] Courses continued throughout the late 1960s.[40] PRRM also trained AFP personnel attached to the Philippine Civil Action Group (PHILCAG) (the Philippine mission to Vietnam), including future President Capt. Fidel Ramos in 1966 and future Defence Secretary Capt. Renato de Villa in 1967,[41] often using Vietnamese trainers trained by the IIRR. Officials also helped the Marcos government in developing counter-insurgency strategy. IIRR President (and former PRRM Acting President) Dr. Juan Flavier, a future cabinet minister under Ramos, was appointed as a consultant on government operations in Central

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[37] To reform government, you had to work with it: "Unless you enter the tiger's den, you cannot get the cubs", Yen quoted a Chinese saying and MEM officials worked in provincial government including Yen, as an assistant to Hunan's Governor and Dr. C.C. Chen who became Szechuan's Commissioner of Public Health (See Buck, **Tell the People...**, pp. 63, 77, & 79-80).

[38] **PRRM In Its Silver Year**, pg. 48.

[39] **The PRRM Story 1952-1965**.

[40] PRRM archives, though incomplete, contain files on 5 courses of one to three months held between 1965 and 1969.

[41] Ramos was a frequent visitor to PRRM's Nueva Ecija's headquarters in the late 1960s and 1970s where his mother-in-law, Josefa Jara Martinez, served as PRRM's training manager.

Luzon in 1966[42] while PRRM Chairman Manuel Manahan, author of the 1967 Manahan Report on the "invisible government" of Central Luzon (in reality nothing more than remnant Huks) was appointed by Marcos as Chairman of the Central Luzon Study Commission in 1969.[43]

A third characteristic was PRRM's disavowal of structural reform, including land reform. In 1970, Manahan was appointed Chair of the Advisory Council for the Marcos government's land reform programme and held discussions with USAID about possible PRRM participation in the land reform programme in Nueva Ecija. PRRM trustees however felt involvement would sidetrack the organisation from its original objectives.[44] PRRM's programme in the 1960s and 70s was based on "a very simple formula": "first, selecting good leaders in the barrio; second, training these good leaders in managerial skills within their capabilities; third, supervision of their co-operative enterprises; and fourth, 'pump-priming' credit unions on a selective basis to finance the small versions of consumer cooperatives, the Buyers Clubs".[45] The formula posed little threat to the elite interests supporting PRRM. "The main causes of rural poverty are limited acreage and antiquated methods of plant and

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[42] Minutes of the PRRM Joint Board and Finance Committee Meeting, 15 July 1966.

[43] See Eduardo Lachica, **Huk: Philippine Agrarian Society in Revolt**, Solidaridad Publishing House, Manila, 1971, pg. 251.

[44] Minutes of PRRM Board of Trustees Meeting, 24 September 1970.

[45] **PRRM And Its Story**, Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, Nieves, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija, 1969, pg. 4. PRRM commissioned a young agriculturalist, Dr. Orlando Sacay, to develop a pre-cooperative organisation (cooperatives, by law, required minimum capitalization of P5,000, beyond the resources of most barrios) and by 1970, PRRM had established Buyers Clubs in 67 barrios in 9 provinces. In 1972, Sacay became Under-Secretary for Co-operatives in the newly-established Department of Local Government and Community Development. Using the Buyers Clubs model developed with PRRM, Sacay devised the *Samahang Nayon* (SN, Pre-Cooperative Association) programme, which allowed SNs to develop into fully-fledged co-operatives (**PRRM In Its Silver Year**, pp. 43-44, and **Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement 1970-1971**, Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, Nieves, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija, 1971, pg. 13).

animal production", argued PRRM[46], suggesting that increased productivity rather than improved tenancy conditions, the main demand of the Huks, was the key to rural stability. PRRM was teaching peasants to make do with the little they had.

At a time of declining agricultural wages[47] and political instability in rural areas, PRRM was poorly equipped to mediate tensions caused by the introduction of more capitalist-based relations of production and more militant peasant demands. PRRM's work in its Nueva Ecija "social laboratory",[48] and the local government legislation it helped introduce between 1955 and 1963 had little impact on provincial politics where Governor Eduardo Joson was reelected in 1963, 1967 and 1971, each time with a comfortable majority. "Over the years", Wolters notes,

> Governor Joson built a network of followers and political leaders (*lider*) down to the [barrio] level. These retainers assisted in disbursing patronage and favours to constituents and in winning votes during elections. Joson earned the gratitude of many people in the [barrios] with his programme of free medicines and hospitalization to indigents. One of Joson's other programmes promoted education for barangay children, providing them with loans for schools in Manila that are paid after graduation. In addition, the governor offered free room, tuition and medical insurance to nearly 700 students throughout the province studying in colleges in Cabanatuan City.[49]

Most of these programmes were paid for by local government expenditure facilitated by the Barrio Council and Barrio Charter laws. Before their passage, barrio lieutenants were

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[46] **The PRRM Story 1952-1965.**

[47] Agricultural wages in the Philippines fell sharply between 1962 and 1974, from an average P41 per day to P23 (1986 prices) (James K. Boyce, **The Political Economy of Growth and Impoverishment in the Marcos Era**, Ateneo de Manila University Press, Quezon City, 1993, pg. 25).

[48] In 1969, PRRM was active in 47 barrios, and in 18 of 31 municipalities, in Nueva Ecija, the "hotbed of Huk dissidence". Nationwide, it worked in 124 barrios in 24 provinces (**PRRM And Its Story**, pg. 1).

[49] Willem Wolters, "New Beginnings or Return to the Past in Nueva Ecija Politics", in Benedict Kerkvliet and Resil Mojares (Eds.), **From Marcos To Aquino: Local Perspectives on Political Transition in the Philippines**, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1991, pg. 209.

appointed and served mainly to help reelect town mayors who in turn helped Governors or local Congressmen on whom they were dependent for election funding. The laws failed to change that situation: Barrio officials were elected but were now dependent on local mayors, and in turn on Governors. PRRM had in fact indirectly helped to strengthen traditional politics in Nueva Ecija and other provinces throughout the country.[50] PRRM according to Wolters, "was a typical Community Development Organisation". In the barrio of Larcon, Bongabon municipality, where Wolters conducted research in the early 1970s, PRRM

> established a credit union and a cooperative store in 1966, both of which were failures. PRRM officials were hardly taken seriously in the village. They worked via one of the local landlord families and some of the farming families in the village...PRRM did not criticize the landlords, did not promote land reform (before 1972), did not address the existing social inequality, did not provide credit. They only...[planted] some trees, [and taught] bookkeeping, village beautification, [and] raking the village gravel paths. Only a few people attended the meetings that PRRM workers occasionally held...Its impact on the village was negligible.[51]

By 1970, the missionary zeal that had animated PRRM in the 1950s had largely evaporated. The PACD, with 2,000 staff operating in more than 10,000 barrios[52] had eclipsed PRRM while the launch of Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) dealt another heavy blow. James Yen, the main intellectual force, had largely withdrawn from PRRM, tensions existed between PRRM and IIRR,[53] short-term barrio sponsorships affected project continuity, specialist RRWs were unable to implement PRRM's broader programme and even after 18 years PRRM regarded its programme as "technically...still in an early stage

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[50] In contrast to China where Yen used traditional respect for education and *tu-shu* (reading books) to secure the empathy of peasants and boost MEM authority vis-a-vis local elites, PRRM was unable to turn the conservatism of its approach to positive effect.

[51] Willem Wolters, private correspondence with author.

[52] 1972 figures. Manahan, "Dr. James Yen: Crusader...", pg. 173.

[53] Many PRRM Trustees felt the symbiotic "two lungs, one body" IIRR-PRRM relationship undermined their own powers and were unhappy when Yen hired, without consulting the PRRM board, a small group of staff in 1967 to interchange between PRRM and IIRR (Minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting, 25 August 1967).

of evolution".[54] Disaffected, most of PRRM's corporate supporters deserted to PBSP or diverted a large portion of their funding, including the Soriano group of companies, Ramon del Rosario's Bacnotan Cement Industries, Shell Oil, La Tondena Distillers, MERALCO and Benguet Corporation.

The declaration of martial law in September 1972 represented another significant blow. Funding problems caused by defections to PBSP necessitated a retrenchment but by February 1974, PRRM had concluded that "our government under the new society has adopted and is implementing the objectives of our own four-fold program in its nationwide rural development programs. Because of this massive government support, the role of the private sector has diminished considerably".[55] As a result, PRRM's regular staffing was reduced from 116 to 75, operations were retrenched and redirected, and key projects cancelled or transferred to PBSP. Despite the retrenchment however, PRRM expanded co-operation with the Marcos regime. Throughout the martial law years (1972-1981), PRRM trained AFP civic action teams working in strategic areas, including Muslim Mindanao[56] and collaborated with government ministries including Agriculture (MA), Social Services and

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[54] On the last three problems, see Gregorio M. Feliciano, "PRRM Organisation, Planning and Administration" in Bayard-Price (Ed.), **Rural Reconstruction...**, pp. 38-41. Much later, an internal document noted PRRM's heyday from 1952 to the mid-196Os; "The spiralling descent...during the next 15 years really began with the sudden removal of the senior staff, financial subsidy cut-off, Dr. Yen gave up his moral control and the big people suddenly lost interest" (Presidents Report, 25 July 1984).

[55] "Summary Report on Latest PRRM Activities and Operations", n.d. [circa February 1974], PRRM archives.

[56] PRRM's archives (though not complete) contain files on 15 training courses held between 1972 and 1981, involving 697 AFP personnel. Another document records that 37 Civilian Home Defence Force (CHDF) personnel were trained in "community-type projects" ("Report on Activities undertaken July-August 1981", n.d.). In a letter to AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Home Defence Brig. Gen. Guillermo Pecache, dated 2 April 1974, PRRM Chairman Manuel Manahan writes "Please let me know in advance when AFP men will leave for Jolo so that we can alert our man to leave with them", suggesting that PRRM staff accompanied AFP teams.

Development (MSSD) and Human Settlements.[57] Although largely abandoned by its corporate funders, PRRM attracted international support during the 1970s and by 1979 had 148 staff and assets of over P7m.[58] By then however the four-fold programme, especially the commitment to self-government, was effectively abandoned and PRRM had become a virtual project sub-contractor for international funders and government ministries.

In 1975, PRRM became involved in a controversial deal, illustrating the way Philippine NGOs are often used as fronts. The Laurel-Langley Agreement of 1954 provided American investors with parity rights in the Philippines until 1974. With its expiration, American-registered companies could no longer own Philippine land. Wrigley Philippines Inc., subsidiary of the American bubble-gum manufacturer, donated a 2.5 hectare site worth P3m to P8m. The site housed Wrigley Philippines' headquarters in Mandalauyong, a prime commercial municipality in Metro Manila. In return, PRRM leased the land to Wrigleys for 25 years, after which full ownership would revert to PRRM. Wrigley's Managing Director Luis Garcia sat on the PRRM board, protecting the company's interests, and Wrigley's paid

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[57] PRRM worked with the MA on the 1977-1982 Cooperatives Development Program for Cagayan Valley (CDPCV), its biggest government project since San Luis (**PRRM In Its Silver Year**, pg. 10), with the MSSD on the Self-Employment Assistance Project for Rural Women in Nueva Ecija ("Report for Year Sept. '80 to Sept. '81", n.d.) and with the Ministry of Human Settlements in establishing the *Pamantasan ng Bagong Lipunan* ((PBL) New Society University, later the University of Life, a pet project of Imelda Marcos) ("Memorandum of Understanding between [PRRM] and [PBL]", n.d. [circa 1981]). Interestingly, Imelda's key project, the *Kilusang Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran*, (KKK, Movement for Livelihood and Progress) (see chapter 2), was eerily similar to PRRM's programme in the 1950s and '60s, even deploying RRW-like cadres. KKK ostensibly aimed to transform barrios (renamed *barangays*) into self-reliant, productive, communities through *Samahang Kabuhayan* (Progress Associations), federated at the municipal and provincial level. There is no record of PRRM involvement in KKK's establishment, although PRRM collaborated with KKK, eg. a PRRM official serving as CDPCV project director served as the concurrent KKK co-ordinator in the MA.

[58] "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow: A Draft Report on the PRRM Seminar-Workshop May 31-June 1 1979", September 1979. Funders included USAID, the US Peace Corps, Asia Foundation, the Canadian government, the International Development Research Council, as well as the IIRR.

rent to PRRM of P50,000 per annum. The IIRR, with registered headquarters in New York, similarly transferred title to its 125-acre training centre in Silang, Cavite, to PRRM, paying rent of P625 per month on a 25 year lease, renewable for another 25. In 1983 however, desperate to sell the Wrigley's title to ease PRRM's financial crisis, PRRM President Enrique Victoriano railed against the deal. By 1983, Victoriano estimated, the Wrigley's site was worth P50m-P80m, yet Wrigley's paid only P5,500 a month in rent. "For such a pittance", Victoriano argued,

> Wrigleys has been allowed to continue operating in the Philippines. It imports raw materials, probably at inflated prices, from the mother company. It is supposedly involved in 'exports' to Asian countries but profits are probably salted away in the mother company. They claim to have been sustaining heavy loses during the past few years. If this is so, how is it that they continue here? They, in effect, are exploiting relatively cheap labor and more to our interest, they are exploiting the use of a prime piece of real estate.[59]

The lease stood however, and PRRM was unable to sell the land.

PRRM had endured numerous bouts of financial uncertainty and had come close to folding in 1973. In 1982-84 however, PRRM faced its gravest crisis yet. Between 1966 and 1979, PRRM received the proceeds of one weekly Philippine Charity Sweepstakes draw per year. Providing over 20% of total income, the allocation was cancelled in 1979 and PRRM received its last payment in April 1981. Manuel Manahan appealed the decision directly to Ferdinand Marcos: "PRRM has worked in unity and self-reliance with your administration since your first assumption to the Presidency and has continued to do so in the interests of the Filipino people", Manahan wrote in a letter to Marcos dated 2 July 1981. The appeal proved unsuccessful however, and soon after USAID withdrew its accreditation, plunging PRRM into financial crisis. By 1982, PRRM had debts of P100,000, the staff retirement fund, worth P67,000 in 1979, was exhausted; staff had either resigned or transferred; and

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[59] Letter to PRRM Chairman Manuel Manahan, 28 November 1983.

those who remained were demoralized. "There were cliques, deep rivalry and hatreds, vandalism and pilferage of properties and facilities", a PRRM assessment later noted. Income generating projects were badly managed and needed subsidies to survive. "Above all", the report noted, "the reputation of PRRM was gone".[60]

A critical internal evaluation noted other causes for PRRM's demise. First, fund-raising efforts coordinated by PRRM President Enrique Victoriano were disastrous: "Funding institutions seem to have word of PRRM's inability to carry out programs", the evaluation noted.[61] Second, staff reductions necessitated by financial constraints lead to acrimony. Many of those released were "tainted with graft and corruption", demoralising the remaining staff.[62] Third, Victoriano became embroiled in a conflict of interest that damaged PRRM. Simultaneously the head of another NGO, Agricultural Managers and Services Foundation (AMSEF), Victoriano committed PRRM to joint projects with AMSEF, many of which proved unsuccessful. Fourth, PRRM's request to have its Philippine Charity Sweepstakes allocation restored opened enquiries into its relationship with the IIRR. "The Presidential Management Staff...was...frantically looking for scapegoats for government losses at elections" and several American-based organisations were under investigation, adversely affecting, the evaluation suggested, PRRM's request. PRRM stumbled through 1983 on small contracts from overseas funders. Its last government contract, with the Ministry of Health and worth P1.4m, expired in March 1984.[63] PRRM "literally ran out of funds in January 1984", and with only 4 RRWs in its staff, virtually ceased to exist as an NGO.[64] Its administrative

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[60] President's Report, 25 July 1984.

[61] "An Evaluation of PRRM's Status and Activities in 1984", note prepared by Ernesto Mondonedo, 21 December 1984. Victoriano resigned in September 1984.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, 25 July 1984.

[64] Ibid, and "An Evaluation of...".

structures preserved by the IIRR, PRRM lay moribund until a dramatic revival in 1986.

3. PRRM 1986-1993.

In late 1984, a committee composed of PRRM Chairman Manuel Manahan, IIRR President Dr. Juan Flavier and Flavier's assistant Conrado Navarro launched a search for a new PRRM President. After PhilDHRRA Chairman Dr. Antonio Ledesma turned it down,[65] Navarro offered the post to Horacio "Boy" Morales during a visit to Fort Bonifacio in Manila where Morales was detained as a political prisoner. If he accepted the post, Navarro told him, PRRM would work to secure his release. Morales accepted, but remained in prison. Finally released on 2 March 1986, he received a visit from a committee representative within days, and two weeks later, accepted the position on a two-year trial.[66]

A former chairman of the *Partido Makabansa* (Nationalist Party) at the University of the Philippines, Morales became a Senior Economist with the Presidential Economics Staff before he helped to establish the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) in the early 1970s.[67] As DAP Executive Vice President, and at the age of 34, Morales was named one of Ten Outstanding Young Men (TOYM)[68] in 1977. Scheduled to receive the award from President Marcos on 26 December, Morales sent word to the ceremony that he had defected

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[65] President's Report, 25 July 1984. Ledesma joined the PRRM board however.

[66] Horacio Morales, interview, Manila, 2 August 1993. In what Morales himself describes as a "package deal", he also assumed responsibility for the equally moribund Co-operatives Foundation of the Philippines Inc. (CFPI).

[67] A dynamic civic activist, Morales also helped establish the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE), the Responsible Parenthood Council (RPC) and the Federation of Electric Cooperatives of the Philippines (FECOP), serving in senior positions with each.

[68] Annual awards sponsored by the Ramon Magsaysay Foundation. Still in existence, the TOYM awards are now sponsored by the Gerry Roxas Foundation.

to the underground National Democratic Front (NDF).[69]

Serving initially as the NDF's official spokesperson,[70] Morales became Convenor of the NDF Preparatory Commission in 1981,[71] and worked extensively with farmers in Nueva Ecija, studying vegetable farming and the feasibility of cooperatives, cooperative banks and other farmer organisations for the NDF. On 21 April 1982 however, Morales was arrested. and severely tortured.[72] Three months later, he was charged with rebellion, vilified by the Marcos-controlled press as a leading communist cadre, and became a minor celebrity when the Supreme Court ordered an unprecedented investigation of his detention and torture.

One of Morales first initiatives in reviving PRRM was the introduction of new staff. Four ex-DAP staff were recruited to senior, and young former NDF/CPP activists to junior, positions. The most radical appointment however was that of Isagani Serrano, Morales's senior in the underground movement, who became Deputy President and PRRM's main theoretician.[73] Serrano worked with the Philippine Ecumenical Committee for Community

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[69] A statement noted: "Many of my colleagues and I sought to undertake reforms within the government, such as in education, agrarian relations, rural industrialization, cooperatives and programs to broaden the people's participation in the management of their affairs. All our well-meaning efforts were in vain" (quoted in "Horacio 'Boy' Morales of the Philippines: The Man and his Cause", Friends of Boy Morales, Quezon City, April 1983).

[70] Morales acted as spokesperson for the NDF in a British television documentary broadcast in July 1981 ("To Sing Our Own Song", British Broadcasting Corporation, London, 1981, broadcast as part of the Third Eye series).

[71] Anonymous interviews.

[72] A talented technocrat admired by Marcos, Morales worked with Dr. Orlando Sacay in designing the *Samahang Nayon* programme and served as Executive Director of the Presidential Task Force on Human Settlements which preceded the Ministry of Human Settlements. In addition to his personal betrayal of Marcos, Morales was also tortured because of the British television documentary "To Sing Our Own Song". Widely praised in media reviews (See **The Times**, 19 July 1981, **Daily Mirror**, 19 July 1981 and **The Daily Telegraph**, 20 July) the documentary led to international condemnation of the Marcos administration provoking intense embarrassment in Malacanang.

[73] Serrano first met Morales at a secret CPP camp in Nueva Ecija during two months of intensive meetings that followed Morales' defection. Serrano was tasked to smuggle Morales from Manila to the camp in the Sierra Madre mountains but was unable to penetrate a security cordon around Manila. Morales was forced to remain in Manila for a week before

Organisation (PECCO) before being arrested in 1973. Released in 1976, he resumed his work with PECCO as a researcher and assistant training director for Metro Manila. Underground however, Serrano served as a senior cadre of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).[74] In 1978, he became a member of the Politburo, the CPP Central Committee, and in 1980 at the eigth party plenum was elected to the CPP's National Executive Committee.[75] Arrested again in 1982, Serrano remained in prison until 1986.

With other prominent activists, Morales launched Volunteers for Popular Democracy (VPD) in late 1986 to test the extent of the February "revolution", and a think-tank, the Institute for Popular Democracy (IPD).[76] In 1987, the CPP sanctioned the activities of the "pop dem" activists to avoid losing "fall-outs" following the mass-release of political prisoners in March 1986.[77] As a result, Morales was able to participate in the CPP-approved *Partido ng Bayan* (PnB, Peoples Party) slate that ran in the 1987 Congressional elections. Morales ran for the Senate with six other prominent activists but fared poorly, exposing the need for a sound institutional base from which to build popular democracy as an alternative progressive project. As a result, PRRM became the pivotal institution within the popular

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being taken finally to Nueva Ecija by other CPP cadre (Isagani Serrano, interview, 23 November 1993).

[74] Where his job as head of the CPP Peasant Section conflicted with his role as a community organiser. Serrano for instance, helped write "Community Organisation: Reform or Revolution (A Critique of the CO Approach)", CPP Peasant Section, January 1978, which condemned Community Organising (see chapter 4), a fact which he acknowledges with embarrassment (Serrano interview).

[75] Anonymous interviews.

[76] Popular democracy, the "political project of the left and the middle [during] the transition" called for: "new structures of direct democracy, like people's councils, and new modes of political intervention like recall, initiative and referendum"; and a "pluralist and multi-party political order", characterized by the "skilful exercise of coalition politics" (Edicio de la Torre, "The Politics of Popular Democracy" in **Two Essays on Popular Democracy**, Institute for Popular Democracy, Quezon City, 1986, pg. 9).

[77] Anonymous interviews.

democratic camp within two years,[78] and Morales stayed on indefinitely as PRRM President.

How did PRRM, a conservative NGO with close ties to the Marcos regime and long controlled by elite interests, come to be led by a former NDF Convenor and a former CPP Executive Committee member? The appointment of Morales underlined traditional features of Philippine politics but it also illustrated significant changes hastened by the collapse of the Marcos regime. Traditionally, Philippine politicians and leaders have been judged on their personal strengths and relationships rather than their ideological positions. Politicians rarely committed themselves to detailed policy positions. When they did, they were usually dictated by pragmatic considerations and usually proved ephemeral and pliable. A politician's ideological position was therefore seen as secondary and ideological lapses were thus quickly forgotten. In the case of PRRM, many of the board members already knew Morales personally as a dynamic civic activist and government technocrat and his association with the NDF was easily forgiven.[79] Second, as a traditional NGO, PRRM had been historically dependent on the personal dynamism of key leaders such as Y.C. James Yen and Conrado Benitez, and Morales was seen as a traditional leader who could enforce tight personal control.

Equally, however, key board members recognised that PRRM's financial demise was triggered in large part by the emergence of a new generation of rural development NGOs.

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[78] Speaking in 1993, Cala argues that PRRM provided institutional stability, both organisationally and financially, to the popular democratic camp, eg. through staff interchanges between PRRM and other "popular democrat" institutions such as IPD and CFPI. IPD knows, Cala argued, that if it folds,it can blend into PRRM, giving it the security to be creative and to take risks (Cala interview).

[79] Before martial law for instance and during his time with the Presidential Economics Staff, Morales had worked closely with Senator Helena Benitez, a PRRM board member. After hearing of Morales's nomination in 1986, Benitez explains, "I thought, 'Oh, Boy was trying to run away from a personal problem, so he went to the mountains'... and then I said I had no objections..." (Helena Benitez, interview, Nieves, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija, 24 July 1994). Benitez, daughter of Dean Conrado Benitez, became PRRM Chairperson in 1990.

Most had developed with significant, especially European, donor support; espoused structural change including redistributive agrarian reform; and worked closely with grass-roots Peoples Organisations. Following an international campaign in support of his Supreme Court case however, Morales was well known to European funding agencies, while his NDF work had brought him into close contact with grassroots POs. Financial considerations were preeminent given the depth of PRRM's financial crisis and because USAID and Asia Foundation, traditional PRRM supporters, had been eclipsed as leading funders of Philippine NGOs. Morales was therefore well equipped to lead PRRM back into the rural development mainstream. Second, PRRM strategy was traditionally based on close collaboration with government agencies. The old PRRM was closely identified with the Marcos regime, was widely discredited and had significantly less links to the new regime than other prominent NGOs, notably PBSP. Morales, however, had close personal ties to the new administration through a group of ex-DAP officials popularly known as the "Morales Boys".[80] Third, after February 1986, *arriviste* political forces interacted with the old in a heady but uncertain political cocktail and the traditionally-prized ability of leaders to forge wide-ranging personal ties was at a premium. In Morales, the PRRM board found a dynamic and assiduous networker with ties to key actors crucial to the organisation's revival. Morales' reputation as a civic activist and technocrat made him acceptable to the philanthropists and businessmen of the PRRM board, his imprisonment made him well known in foreign donor circles, and his DAP connection provided a network of contacts in government. In addition, past activities

[80] The most prominent were Jesus P. de Jesus, Secretary for Public Works and Highways from January 1991 (serving in both the Aquino and Ramos administrations), and Carlos Fernandez, Under-Secretary (under Aquino) and Secretary (under Ramos) for Agriculture. According to Morales "there [was] a dozen, maybe more, who were associated with me in the DAP who we tried to mobilise during the Aquino [administration]" (interview, 2 August 1993).

in the NDF not only provided contacts in the mainstream NGO/PO community, the centre-of gravity of which had moved significantly since the early 1970s, but his ties to the underground were important if PRRM was to work in parts of the country effectively controlled by the CPP.

Morales' appointment brought quick returns. With support from IIRR and European funding agencies, PRRM embarked on a multi-project socio-economic programme in Negros based on the P27.23m Negros Food Aid Program (FAP), launched in October 1986 with the help of local POs and funded by the German Freedom From Hunger Campaign.[81] In May 1987, NOVIB, the Netherlands Organisation for International Development Cooperation, arranged for Morales and Serrano to visit partner NGOs in India and Bangladesh to study the feasibility of an integrated rural development programme. As a result, NOVIB agreed to fund the 3-year P25m Rural Development and Democratization Program (RDDP), consolidating PRRM's revival. Incorporating the ideas of Morales and Serrano and crystallised by their experience in India and Bangladesh, the RDDP was launched in January 1988. Designed to balance a commitment to empowerment and to socio-economic work, the RDDP entailed four main components: organising and consciousness-raising; livelihood; savings and credit; and village primary health care.

In addition to securing new funding, Morales also embarked on a broader programme of institutional development. First, chapters were established to encourage national membership, to develop an institutional base for VPD and to help establish branch offices to implement projects: Nueva Ecija, Manila, and Bataan in 1987; Ifugao in 1988; and North

[81] An intensive ten-month programme, the FAP helped 2,500 households among an estimated 250,000 to 300,000 sugar workers displaced by Negros's sugar crisis, located in 20 of the 26 municipalities of Negros Occidental (Ramon Faustino Sales, PRRM Deputy Vice-President and Field Operations Manager, interview, Manila, 3 August 1993).

Cotabato in 1989. Second, a National Assembly was held in February 1988 at which a new Board of Trustees was elected, removing many of the old elite guard, yet retaining the traditional mix of government officials, educationalists, and businessmen.[82] Third, Morales launched a programme of decentralization, giving full corporate powers to chapters and allowing them to secure separate registration with the Securities and Exchange Commission.[83]

The rapid pace of development inevitably provoked tensions. To set up its Negros programme, PRRM negotiated with the CPP regional leadership[84] and worked with POs tagged by the military as pro-NDF,[85] provoking allegations of communist sympathies. PRRM became embroiled in brief national controversy in May 1988 when Defence Under-Secretary Fortunato Abat accused Morales of raising funds abroad for the CPP, only to withdraw the allegations in a letter to Morales three days later.[86] Negros Occidental Governor Daniel "Bitay" Lacson also accused PRRM of communist allegiances, while PRRM board members and programmes suffered military harassment.[87] PRRM also became

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[82] Among those removed from the board were Raul Concepcion, President of Concepcion Industries, Andres Siochi, and Antonio Ledesma. Those elected or reelected included Vicente Jayme, Finance Secretary in the Aquino government and a friend of Morales; Luis Garcia, President of Wrigley Philippines, Juan Flavier, President of IIRR, and Sixto K. Roxas.

[83] A decision approved at the Board of Trustees meeting of 25 January 1989.

[84] "Senior figures" in PRRM reputedly negotiated directly with CPP Visayas Commission head Arturo Tabara to secure CPP support for the Negros programme (anonymous interviews).

[85] Some board members, notably Antonio Ledesma, were concerned about the National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW) being the main project partner in the Negros Food Aid Project (Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, 15 September 1987).

[86] "Morales not raising CPP funds: Abat", **The Manila Chronicle**, 4 July 1988.

[87] The AFP confiscated PRRM food supplied in Sorsogon and branded PRRM's Rural Development and Democratization Programme in Ifugao as an NDF front, while military operatives in Nueva Ecija publicized their inquiries into PRRM's management (Minutes of the PRRM Board of Trustees Meeting, 25 January 1989). The minutes note that PRRM had complained to the AFP about the harassment and that Morales was scheduled to meet the Chief of the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) to discuss the matter. Minutes of the PRRM Board of Trustees Meeting of 17 August 1988 record that board member Dr.

embroiled in organisational tensions. By January 1989, implementation of the RDDP was three months behind schedule, and only 70% of budgeted expenditure was committed. 1988, Morales admitted, "was a period of trying to expand very fast into so many areas, trying to get new projects, new programmes and new funding [and] at the same time trying to build ...staff capability".[88] Other problems were experienced in dealing with project partners, local POs who expected to be involved in project design,[89] and disputes frequently developed with local NGOs over "turf", poaching of staff, ideology, and personality issues.[90] Another problem caught PRRM by surprise. PRRM's choice of regions for the RDDP[91] presumed an existing level of organisation, ie a relatively dense network of POs and NGOs with which PRRM could collaborate. Yet even in provinces like Bataan with a strong history of activation and mobilization, PRRM found pockets where local communities were unorganised, forcing it to engage in direct organising from 1989.[92] Despite the problems however, the RDDP was a general success and in 1991, PRRM launched a new 10-year programme, the Sustainable Rural District Development Programme (SRDDP), again with NOVIB funding.

4. PRRM and Philippine Politics: Philosophy and Implementation.

Edgardo Agno, President of Central Luzon State University, was warned by the military to "keep [his] distance" from PRRM.

[88] Quoted in the Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, 25 January 1989.

[89] Implementation of PRRMs Food and Nutrition Programme in Negros, for instance, had to be delayed to take account of objections from partner POs, and the project redesigned (ibid).

[90] For instance, North Cotabato, where PRRM enjoyed poor working relationships with the main provincial development NGOs, *BATUNA* and the ANI Foundation, until 1991 (interviews with two former North Cotabato branch managers: Marivic Raquiza, 10 October 1993, and Rose Nierras, 18 October 1993).

[91] Ifugao, Nueva Ecija, Bataan, Eastern Samar and North Cotabato.

[92] Serrano interview.

A number of factors shape the political philosophy of prominent Philippine NGOs. First, long-standing NGOs are influenced by their historical mission and their traditions. Even in the case of PRRM, effectively relaunched in 1986, senior managers were obliged to formulate a strategy that echoed the organisation's traditional mission and retained the confidence of traditional supporters.

Second, in the Philippines especially, traditional deference to leaders (*mga lider*) and the traditional dominance of individuals over institutional or bureaucratic decision-making processes, gives prominent figures significant influence over NGO strategy. In the case of PRRM, two particularly influential leaders, Horacio Morales, the hands on manager, and Isagani Serrano, the theoretician, played a significant role in shaping PRRM's new political trajectory.

Third, political philosophy is influenced by the constellation of political forces represented in the NGO's decision-making structures and, specifically, the need to reconcile competing institutional interests. In PRRM, philanthropic, business, and governmental interests dominated the board, and sought continuity in PRRM's programmes, especially smooth working relations with government agencies. The staff included ex-DAP officials who supported close ties with government and former NDF and CPP activists who sought close links with militant NGOs and POs and a critical stance towards the Aquino administration. Different donors meanwhile adopted different positions. Most European funders sought close links between PRRM and NGOs/POs that had actively opposed the Marcos regime and remained mistrustful of the new regime while multilateral and American funders sought smooth ties with government and a focus on the socio-economic and technical aspects of development programmes. Fourth, the particular institutional structures by which NGOs could participate in politics exerted an influence of their own. Electoral politics and local

government in particular exerted a significant influence over the evolution of PRRM political philosophy in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

In 1986, according to Morales, PRRM had minimal resources, had no membership base, had "strayed from the mainstream of the Philippine agrarian movement and ...lagged far behind other non-governmental organisations in supporting the cause of the peasant struggle". A central reason, he acknowledged, was the "failure to address the structural causes of underdevelopment".[93] After six months of consultations with other NGOs, government officials, and peasant leaders in 1986, a PRRM "task force" defined a "new philosophical orientation for the organisation", embodied in the new slogan "rural development through people's empowerment".[94] Adhering closely to the organisations historical mission, PRRM retained the Yen four-fold approach (education to combat illiteracy, livelihood to combat poverty, health to combat disease and civic government to combat inertia). Radicalizing the approach however and making it more relevant in the political ferment of the early Aquino years, PRRM put civic government at the centre.

PRRM philosophy traditionally espoused barrio-level structures that encouraged citizen involvement in small-scale local development programmes and the new programme promoted: sectoral organisations of poor peasants, landless workers, rural women, youth and other marginalized sectors of rural society; cooperatives for socio-economic activities; and community organizations that could evolve into "people's councils".[95] PRRM however also espoused "popular democracy", a radical agenda that represented a significant departure from PRRM's traditional vision, especially in terms of its scale: an activist government; a vibrant network of POs; thorough-going agrarian reform; a nationalist industrialization strategy; and

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[93] Morales, "The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement...", pg. 153.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid, pg. 154.

diversified international relations.[96] The basic philosophy embodied in the SRDDP entailed a new four-fold approach: (1) empowerment (mobilizing people through rural institutions); (2) local economic development including alternative finance and marketing schemes; (3) protecting, restoring and upgrading the environment through schemes already under way (such as Bataan and Ifugao); (4) advocacy, development cooperation and collaboration with government and multilateral agencies combined with criticism when required.[97]

In the new international language of NGO action, PRRM packaged its new programme of interventions as a "fourth generation strategy" (FGS), a term coined by Isagani Serrano in 1989.[98] "The basic characteristic of a [FGS]", Serrano explains

> is comprehensive systems change...[T]here are different levels or arenas of struggle. At the lower level, you can see very simple reforms, civic responses to certain social problems... relief, responding to a basic humanitarian need, responding to people suffering as a result of a natural disaster...so long as this is linked to broader goals that have transformative elements in them, then I consider them part of a bigger transformative project...Now, as to what is the trajectory and who are the carriers, I consider mass movements still as a key and not just simple NGOs.[99]

As the core programme of PRRM, the SRDDP represents Serrano's FGS in its clearest form. "Beyond mere criticism of [government] policy", PRRM argue,

> NGOs and POs are...pro-actively building and demonstrating the viability of an alternative model of development [to]...address the continuing poverty and environmental crisis with a view towards eventually pushing the alternative to

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[96] See Horacio Morales, "The Political Economy of Popular Democracy" in **Two Essays on Popular Democracy**, pp. 16-25.

[97] Horacio Morales, Presidents address, PRRM 41st Anniversary Celebrations, Nieves, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija, 23 July 1994.

[98] Isagani Serrano, "Developing a Fourth Generation Strategy", paper presented at the 31st International Training Conference, International Institute for Rural Reconstruction, 11 October 1989, reprinted in Isagani Serrano, **On Civil Society**, Monograph Series, Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, Quezon City, 1993, pp. 13-20. Korten credits Serrano with coining the term (Korten, **Getting to the 21st Century...**, pg. 123).

[99] Serrano interview.

the mainstream.[100]

A key component in this strategy, the SRDDP is based on the idea of Sustainable Rural Districts (SRDs), localities of roughly 50,000 households "woven around a variety of ecosystems, production processing and marketing linkages"[101]. Within a maximum range of 4 to 8 municipalities, the population of an SRD (200,000 to 300,000) represents a minimum "critical mass" needed to transform local economics and politics, and demonstrate the viability of the SRDDP as an alternative development strategy.[102] Launched in five provinces by 1993 (Ifugao; Nueva Ecija; Bataan; Camarines Sur and North Cotabato) and covering 273 barrios in 38 municipalities, the SRDDP is based on five specific strategies: (1) Organising peoples institutions from the village to the district level; (2) Conscientization and education; (3) mobilization; (4) leadership formation; and (5) Skills development and technology.[103] These however fall into two broader strategies. The first, Integrated Area Development, promotes self-governance through rural institutions; sustainable local economic development; food security and basic social services delivery. Using the SRDDP as a springboard however, the second, policy advocacy, promotes the incorporation of PRRM philosophy into government policy, i.e., the "mainstreaming" of its development alternative.[104] Integrated Area Development clearly falls within Korten's definition of a

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[100] "The Way To Power: Sustainable Rural District Development Framework", Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, Quezon City, May 1993, pg. 6

[101] Morales, "Scaling Up NGO Impact...", pg. 6. The Philippines, according to PRRM, has four ecosystems: 1. Upland forests; 2. mid-level foothills; 3. interior lowlands; 4. coastal plains. An SRD straddles at least 2 ecosystems ("Sustainable Rural District Development Programme: Development In the Hands of The People", Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, Quezon City, 1992, pg. 2).

[102] "Sustainable Rural District Development Programme..." pp. 3-4.

[103] Ibid, pp. 5 and "Optimizing Gains, Enhancing Approaches: 1992 Annual Report", Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement, Quezon City, June 1993, pg. 6.

[104] Ibid.

third generation strategy[105], although as Serrano notes above, is nevertheless an important component of an evolving FGS. The policy advocacy function however reveals the most innovative and important aspects of the FGS and shows PRRM fulfilling many of the traditional roles of interest groups in liberal democracies.

5. Coalition Building.

The collapse of the Marcos regime in February 1986 triggered a heady expansion in political mobilization and issue-based social movements proliferated. NGOs such as PRRM played a significant role in their establishment and NGO participation represented a significant institutional characteristic of these movements and influenced their political agendas. Inter-NGO coalitions also proliferated, facilitating greater cooperation and coordination among NGOs and increasing their political power and influence. PRRM played an important role in broad issue-based coalitions in the late 1980s and early '90s. In May 1987, it helped launch the Congress for a Peoples Agrarian Reform (CPAR), brokering the institutional and ideological rivalries need to create the necessary unity,[106] and in particular, securing the support of foreign funders and the NDF/CPP.[107] In March 1988, "PRRM practically set up" the Freedom From Debt Coalition (FDC);[108] for the first 6 months, three PRRM staff

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[105] According to Korten, "Third generation strategies focus on creating a policy and institutional setting that facilitates...sustainable and inclusive local development action" (Korten, **Getting To The 21st Century...**, pg. 121).

[106] Cesar "Cha" Cala, Executive Director, Institute for Popular Democracy, interview, Manila, 30 October 1993.

[107] Morales toured European funding agencies in 1988 to secure financial support for CPAR, accompanied by Rep. Bonifacio Gillego, Oscar Castillo of PAKISAMA and Ed Mariano of KMP. Serrano was reputedly instrumental in securing national democrat support when CPAR almost collapsed during the Agrarian Reform Express of 1987 (anonymous interviews). Serrano himself plays down his role. The CPP/NDF played an active role from the outset in establishing CPAR, he says, and didn't need much convincing to stay (Serrano interview).

[108] Lisa Dacanay, PRRM Deputy Vice President, interview, Manila, 25 October 1993.

worked full-time in the FDC office and PRRM covered the bulk of FDC's costs in its first year.[109] By 1988 in a dynamic and almost aggressive approach to coalition-building, it had also become active in the NGO Coalition for Cooperatives Development, the Council for Peoples Development, the Forum on NGO Ethics and the Philippine Council for Rural Savings and Finance.

PRRM was also active in local-level coalitions. In North Cotabato for instance, it participated in the *Koalisyong Kuryente ng Kotabato* (KKK, Cotabato Electricity Coalition) which protested against electricity price increases (providing the secretarial support) and *PAGMAKA* (*Paghiusa Mag-uuma sa Kotabato*, the Alliance of Cotabato Farmers) which protested against government rice policy. It also participates in Task Force Apo Sandawa (TFAS, named after Sandawa, God of Mt. Apo), an NGO-PO-COG coalition formed to oppose plans by the Philippine National Oil Corporation (PNOC) to build a geothermal electricity plant on tribal ancestral land in the Mt. Apo national park, and NGO Forum, a local NGO coalition.

National-level or tertiary NGO/PO coalitions are viewed by many Filipino NGO activists as positive alternatives to large, bureaucratized, NGOs (see for instance Karina Constantino-David in Chapter 4) yet by 1989, PRRM had effectively withdrawn from CPAR. Within CPAR, Serrano explains, PRRM had advocated

> flexible multilateral setups; primaries, federations, networks [plus] a multiplicity of bilateral arrangements, especially project based...We need to expand as much as we can and the less that we limit the initiative with bureaucratic structures, the better for all of us. Then, we can draw the net at certain points when we need to respond to common issues, where we need to put up common fronts, especially in terms of advocacy work or facing up to country programs.[110]

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[109] Rose Nierras, PRRM Deputy Vice President, interview, Manila, 18 October 1993.
[110] Serrano interview.

Operationally however, Serrano concedes, the strategy is very difficult to implement and CPAR began to "calcify". By 1989, according to another PRRM official, "CPAR had become a monster as the secretariat began to represent CPAR itself instead of leading the member organisations in representing CPAR".[111] By 1990, it had also effectively withdrawn from FDC.[112] In 1993, CPAR collapsed but PRRM played a key role in establishing a successor, the Philippine Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Development (PhilCARRD) along with Kaisahan, PEACE, the Centre for Community Services (CCS) and the Centre for Reform, Education and Training (CARET), uniting the main centre-left political formations (Pandayan through CCS, BISIG through CARET, and the Popular Democrats through PRRM itself).

Despite PhilCARRD however, Serrano's approach to CPAR reveals important dilemmas in PRRM's coalition-building strategy. First, Serrano, the epitome in many respects of the quixotic political theorists who wield such influence over Philippine NGO strategy, professes to be "somewhere in the mix of eco-socialism and eco-anarchism": "I'm basically an anarchist at heart...I think anarchism will be an antidote to a political project that is leading towards the capture of state power".[113] Yet, PRRM, by its size, is in many respects the antithesis of the "flexible, multilateral arrangements" which he advocates. PRRM's rapid growth, Morales argues, has been deliberate:

> Operational expansion is seen as a need to enable us to run a model of development that would make an impact on a nationwide scale. And especially in a politically volatile environment like the Philippines, a big NGO stands a better chance of survival than smaller ones. Moreover, PRRM's strategies require an emphasis on operational expansion to be able to demonstrate the workability of a sustainable area development model on the ground as well as

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[111] Lisa Dacanay, interview, 25 October 1993.

[112] According to Nierras, PRRM withdrew from FDC because "it realised it had been devoting insufficient time to actual project work which should have been its focus" (Nierras interview, 18 October 1993).

[113] Serrano interview.

undertake the necessary policy advocacy at the national and global level.[114]

Rapid growth however has led to tension with other NGOs and POs. As one internal document notes,

> There's a negative side to PRRM's visibility, size, and operational reach. At the very least, PRRM appears very threatening to many groups. Fair or not, it has been the object of jealousies and sometimes hatred. The External Relations Office has yet to find an effective way of dealing with this situation.[115]

Second, in a polity where political parties organise and mobilize predominantly around patronage concerns, PRRM plays an important political role in mobilising constituencies through broad coalitions that unite NGOs, POs and the main political formations/cause-oriented groups around specific political issues. PRRM's focus however has been undermined by the strategy of using coalitions as the primary means by which it engages in campaign and advocacy work because campaigns have been too broadly-based to achieve tangible policy impact. At any one time, PRRM participates in a vast array of national-level coalitions (17 according to its 1992 brochure), placing great strain on staff resources. By contrast, it has no Congressional lobbyists or Press Officers to lead a more focused campaign. Similarly, within FDC, PRRM sought to build the coalition's membership to enable it to reduce its involvement but without promoting an effective division of labour among members. Local level coalitions are equally problematic. In North Cotabato for instance, the NGO Forum, established in 1992, is loose and uncoordinated, meets irregularly and, in the absence of a clear programme or strategy, is largely reactive.

Third, PRRM's strategy reveals the complexity of coalition politics since 1986.

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[114] Morales, "Scaling Up NGO Impact... ", pg. 7.

[115] Minutes of the PRRM Board of Trustees meeting 17 February 1993.

PRRM refused to join CODE-NGO when it was launched in 1990 and withdrew from the Council for Peoples Development (CPD) when it became a founding network of CODE-NGO. According to IPD's Clark Soriano, PRRM left because its area-centred focus clashed with CPD's national orientation.[116] Soriano's explanation, however, highlights more sophisticated institutional and ideological rivalries since PRRM retained a significant national orientation. Before 1986, NGO commitment to "high politics", unified and systematic opposition to the Marcos regime, mitigated ideological and professional cleavages. With the collapse of the Marcos regime however came a new emphasis on "low politics", organisational expansion, programme development and issue-based campaigning. Ideological and professional differences proliferated. PRRM and CODE-NGO shared a commitment to agrarian reform or indigenous rights but differed, for instance, on relationships with funders, especially USAID. PRRM also saw CODE-NGO as an attempt to build an institutional power base capable of rivalling the national democrats and nascent popular democrats.

Ideological and professional rivalries however were also a mask for more profound personal rivalries. Like Philippine politics generally, the Philippine NGO world is characterized by leaders and figureheads, *mga lider* or *mga panginoon ng NGO* (NGO bosses or lords, from the Tagalog for landlord, *panginoon ng lupa*)[117] and NGO leaders are frequently prone to the traditional politicians trait of *nagbibida* (acting the hero).[118] NGO sources testify to an unofficial rivalry between three main NGO leaders; Horacio "Boy" Morales of PRRM, Karina Constantino-David of CODE-NGO and Maximo "Junie" Kalaw of the Haribon Foundation. As Maximo Kalaw, for instance, consolidated his stewardship

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[116] Clark Soriano, Institute for Popular Democracy, interview, Manila, 13 July 1993.

[117] Joel Rocamora, Board member, Institute for Popular Democracy, interview, Manila, 5 May 1993.

[118] A term used by one NGO leader to describe NGO leaders who feel circumscribed by the authority of others (anonymous interview).

over Green Forum, the main environmental NGO coalition, so PRRM gradually withdrew, underlining deep personalist motivations behind its coalition policies.

Underlining the complex mix of institutional, ideological and personalist tensions that animate NGO coalition politics, PRRM was nominated by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in 1992 as the local NGO partner in the P500m second stage of the World Bank-funded Integrated Protected Areas System (IPAS). Others objected however, notably Green Forum and Maximo Kalaw. In mid-1993, new Environment Secretary Angel Alcala, Kalaw's associate on the Haribon board, wrote to the World Bank to insist that the funds be coursed through a consortium of Philippine NGOs in which Kalaw would play a leading role[119] and by the end of 1993, PRRM's participation was in doubt. According to Constantino-David, CODE-NGO and Green Forum objected because PRRM was given a subordinate role to the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the World Bank's lead partners in the IPAS project, "consigning Philippine NGOs to the role of subsidiaries to international NGOs".[120] CODE-NGO and Green Forum however had collaborated in establishing the USAID-funded Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE) where WWF acted as USAID's lead partner,[121] suggesting a more profound rivalry over access to funding.

Fourth, PRRM's strategy of organising a "critical mass" in operational areas in support of the SRDDP strategy brought it into sharp conflict with the CPP-NDF, national-level NGOs, and local NGOs/POs. Following its withdrawal from CPD, PRRM established Convergence for Community Centred Area Development (CONVERGENCE) in February

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[119] Yasmin Arquiza, "Funding agencies shape RP agenda", **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 2 November 1993.

[120] Karina Constantino David, interview, Manila, 9 July 1993.

[121] According to Constantino-David, the WWF merely managed the debt transaction in the FPE project but would manage project implementation in the proposed IPAS 2 (ibid).

1991 and by 1993 had 17 NGO members committed to integrated area development.[122] According to CONVERGENCE, the coalition differs from others where members are committed to sectoral organising.[123] "When you try to fit national problems to local problems", Soriano argues,

> the effect is to try to enforce change from the outside. But the area-centred approach tries to move away from that by forging local positions on local issues, eg. using the Local Government Code (LGC) to weaken traditional politics, using integrated social forestry projects to undermine illegal logging, using credit programmes to undermine usury and using the LGC and peace zones to undermine militarization.[124]

The strategy however exacerbated conflict between PRRM & CONVERGENCE and the CPP & NDF. According to former NDF official spokesman Satur Ocampo,

> The major part of the movement is critical of PRRMs programs that tend to compete at least, or to deflect the energies and sentiments of people in the rural areas from the revolutionary movement. But to the extent of introducing modern techniques of agriculture or political organising, the NDF indirectly supports the movement and generally helps in arousing and organising the people in the countryside... Another aspect of the criticism of the PRRM is that it becomes some sort of magnet in attracting former leaders of the movement who have been imprisoned and who have been released. Instead of going back to the mainstream underground, they are being absorbed or go to the PRRM.[125]

The weakening of the CPP and the breakdown in the traditional relationship between the CPP and sympathetic NGOs undermined the force of this condemnation. Nevertheless, the CPP's

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[122] Amee Coronel, Deputy Executive Director, CONVERGENCE, interview, Manila, 16 August 1991.

[123] Ibid. With sectoral organising, according to Isagani Serrano "You may be able to lift the situation of the poorest of the poor but that doesn't change the whole set-up...social transformation must really be cross-sectoral. It [takes] a lot of actors to change the order of things, even in a locality". Underlining the political sensitivity of this approach, Serrano acknowledges that it leaves PRRM and CONVERGENCE open to charges of "reformism" (Serrano interview).

[124] Clark Soriano, Institute for Popular Democracy, interview, Manila, 13 July 1993.

[125] Satur Ocampo, interview, 19 November 1993. With the emergence of the July 1992 CPP document, "Reaffirm Our Basic Principles..." (see Chapter 4), Ocampo noted, "the line of division became much more pronounced".

critical stance had enormous implications for PRRM and CONVERGENCE operations. Even in North Cotabato, where the establishment of PRRM's branch resulted from an invitation from regional CPP leaders when PRRM was searching for a Mindanao base,[126] ideological tension with local NGOs was a significant problem, exacerbated by the CPP's internal "Reaffirm" V "Reject" debate. "Both camps are dealing with PRRM and applying pressure" PRRM's Lisa Dacanay noted in October 1993, "PRRM has to deal with the fact that branch managers have sympathies with both camps and may take sides, [though] none have so far".[127]

Growing tension with local NGOs and POs also undermines the potential for broad coalitions critical to fourth generation strategies. In establishing branches in the late 1980s, PRRM provoked resentment by encroaching on territory,[128] paying relatively high salaries and poaching staff from other NGOs and POs. Philippine NGOs and POs, according to Cala, thrive on their capacity to represent issues[129] and many feared losing their mandate in a "politics of representation" battle that PRRM's arrival heralded. Within CONVERGENCE, Cala notes, the programmes of member NGOs were not sufficiently developed to facilitate "interfaces" with others. Individual NGOs suspected that their own "recipes" would be poached and in the climate of the CPP internal debate, political trust was undermined.[130] PRRM has also been affected by a general tension as POs seek increasingly to access

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[126] anonymous interviews.

[127] Dacanay, interview, 25 October 1993.

[128] In 1989 for instance, when PRRM established a branch in North Cotabato, it upset an effective *modus vivendi* between *BATUNA* and the ANI Foundation whereby Cotabato's main highway roughly delineated their respective territories. Both organisations feared PRRM's greater financial resources would entice local POs away from the smaller NGOs and differences with PRRM were only resolved in 1991, partly PRRM concedes because it didn't "have in place the systems to ensure dialogue" (Raquiza interview).

[129] Cala interview.

[130] Ibid.

government and foreign funding directly, bypassing intermediate NGOs. PRRM, for instance, worked closely with the Bataan chapter of the National Council for Aquatic Resources (NACFAR) in implementing the DA's Fisheries Sector Programme (FSP). As a result, NACFAR-Bataan felt sufficiently confident in 1992 to apply directly (and in competition with PRRM) to the Presidential Management Staff for funding to implement a food-for-work scheme for fishermen displaced by "Red Tide", widespread pollution-induced algae that damaged fisheries along Bataan's shores. The PMS turned down the NACFAR-Bataan application and renewed its contract with PRRM. According to Lisa Dacanay, PRRM is sympathetic to attempts by POs such as NACFAR-Bataan to access funding directly and feels many NGOs wrongly view their intermediate roles in permanent terms.[131] By competing prematurely for funding however, Dacanay warns, POs risk cooptation since even big NGOs find it difficult to deal with funders.

6. Volunteer Mobilization.

Soon after relaunching PRRM in 1986, Morales launched a programme of chapter building to provide PRRM with a membership base and by 1992 PRRM had chapters in Ifugao, San Jose City (Nueva Ecija), Bataan, Cavite, Camarines Sur, Iloilo, North Cotabato, Ilocos Sur, Baguio-Benguet, La Union and Metro Manila (Manila, Pasig, and Quezon City).[132] At PRRM's 41st anniversary celebrations in Nueva Ecija in July 1993, the first chapter gathering, 74 delegates representing 16 chapters heard Morales describe them as "the base of PRRM...the centre of power and empowerment".[133] Staff and rural reconstruction

[131] Dacanay interview, 25 October 1993.

[132] Minutes of the PRRM Executive Committee Meeting, 30 April 1992. PRRM is reluctant to provide a figure for total individual members although anonymous sources put it at roughly 300 to 500.

[133] President's Address, 23 July 1993.

workers from the '50s and '60s, many of whom had joined the new chapters, revelled in PRRM's rebirth and applauded loudly, underlining the significant blend of continuity and change with which he had infused the organisation.

The chapters play a critical role in PRRM strategy. First, they are critical to the SRDDP strategy of developing a "critical mass" capable of transforming power relations in targeted areas. Second, PRRM chapters represent a vital institutional base for the Movement for Popular Democracy (MPD)(which replaced VPD after the 1987 Congressional elections) and in many parts of the country MPD has yet to expand beyond the PRRM chapter base. Third, almost 90% of PRRM's income in 1992 came from foreign funders, 63% of total income from NOVIB alone[134] and, in anticipation of a drop in foreign funds, chapters are expected to reduce dependence in future years.

In building chapters, PRRM has concentrated on attracting middle-class professionals. In North Cotabato for instance, PRRM has roughly 25 active and 25 dormant members, mostly drawn from middle-class professions, who became involved through acquaintances, relatives, or through participation in PRRM-organised training sessions.[135] Many of the members are local government officials and PRRM staff perceive a change in outlook through their involvement in the chapter. The chapter, for instance, is currently collaborating with the Tourism Council of Cotabato to implement an alternative tourism plan in Magpet municipality and raised P25,000 for the project in October 1993.[136] For an organisation that has only become a membership-based NGO recently, this new outlook is seen internally as a

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[134] Figures supplied by Cecilia Perez, Accountant, Financial Services Office, PRRM, 18 October 1993.

[135] Rizalino Barandino and Alexander Lopez, PRRM North Cotabato branch, interview, Kidapawan, 6 November 1993.

[136] Ibid.

significant achievement and has led other local NGOs to consider membership bases.[137]

Building the chapter structures has entailed a balancing of conflicting interests however that few NGOs would contemplate. Chapter members formerly active in cause-oriented groups are largely unaware of PRRM support for the Marcos regime or its record of involvement in counter-insurgency activities.[138] Similarly, elite philantrophists within PRRM's Board of Trustees, and chapter members who respect them, are largely unaware of the implications of PRRM's espousal of the popular democratic cause. At PRRM's 41st anniversary celebrations, Chairperson Helena Benitez argued that PRRM's basic philosophy entailed "building democracy from the bottom up", echoing traditional PRRM philosophy that eschewed confrontation with elite power structures. According to Morales however, PRRM not only builds democracy from the bottom but also exploits fissures in the cohesion of traditional elitist decision-making structures, especially by winning over officials working in local or national government.[139] To many members however these differences are barely perceptible, and PRRM managers are reluctant to clarify the resultant ambiguity.

7. Electoral Participation.

PRRM played little part in the 1987 Congressional elections (apart from Morales' participation in *Partido ng Bayan's* Senatorial slate) or the 1988 local elections. By 1992 however, when the climate for NGO participation in elections had changed, PRRM's branch and chapter structure and its close identification with the Movement for Popular Democracy enabled it to play an active role. MPD was limited organisationally by 1992, with

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[137] Ibid.

[138] Anonymous conversations with delegates to the 41st anniversary celebrations. Inevitably, perhaps, Morales, "The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement....", offers a highly sanitised account of the organisation's history.

[139] Morales interview, 23 November 1993.

membership effectively combined to NGOs within the popular democratic "cluster" (including PRRM, IPD, CFPI, Popular Education for Peoples Enlightenment (PEPE, a network) and the Centre for Urban Community Development (CUCD)[140] but in the few areas where it was strong, notably Bataan and North Cotabato, MPD achieved notable successes. In Bataan, 2 MPD candidates were elected as town mayors (in Orani and Morong) and MPD contributed to the reelection of Congressman Felicito Payumo on the Liberal Party slate. In North Cotabato, MPD contributed to the reelection of Congressman Gregorio Andolana on the Lakas-NUCD slate. Nationally, MPD claims to have had 22 of its own or its supported candidates elected including Naga City where an MPD candidate became mayor,[141] insignificant in light of 17,000 positions available in the campaign, yet indicative of growing NGO involvement in election campaigns.

Bataan was PRRM's main success. PRRM did not participate directly in the election campaign but many staff (including the branch manager) took leave of absence to work with MPD and *Kabalikatan* (Partnership or Shoulder-to-shoulder, a PO electoral coalition formed by *Balikatan*, the local MPD chapter).[142] MPD participated in *Akbayan*, the national level NGO-PO-COG coalition but the election campaign in Bataan was fought primarily on local issues. Philippine election campaigns at the local level are invariably fought around local issues and local alliances. Given the difficulty of relating *Akbayan's* national platform to local concerns, *Kabalikatan* therefore mobilized NGO and POs around local issues.[143] *Kabalikatan* also played an innovative role in mobilising volunteers to monitor election count centres. IPD's Soriano explains:

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[140] Dacanay interview 29 April 1993.

[141] Soriano interview.

[142] Dacanay interview 29 April 1993.

[143] Ibid. *Kabalikatan* however also promoted national slates, for instance, the presidential and vice-presidential campaigns of Salonga and Pimentel.

> In 1987, *Partido ng Bayan* spent 80% of its election funds on the campaign. Only 20% was retained for monitoring vote counting. The PnB poll-watchers were all hungry because they had no food allowance and there was no provision for feeding or for rotating poll-watchers....You can have 20,000 votes and your opponent can have only 2,000. All he has to do is knock one of your "0"s and add one to his own figure.[144]

PnB suffered badly in 1987 as a result, but MPD believes that its volunteer mobilization programme reduced fraud in Bataan in 1992. On its own however, this was insufficient to counter the mechanics of traditional electoral patronage. Soriano continues:

> Traditional politicians [running for Congress] only spend about 50% of their election expenses on the campaign itself. In an average province, about 30,000 votes are needed from about 200 precincts, about 150 votes per precinct. The traditional politician has a representative in each precinct responsible for identifying those voters and distributing to them P200 pesos each, about P30,000 per precinct or P6m in total. The politician doesn't have to buy every vote, maybe 20,000, which brings the cost down to P4m. What we needed was a precinct-based approach. What we had to do was have a few people in every precinct and on every day in the week or two leading up to the election campaign for each to persuade one or two voters to support a particular candidate. This for us was very work intensive whereas for the traditional politician its cost intensive.[145]

In North Cotabato, where MPD's base was effectively the PRRM branch and chapter, a different strategy was adopted. In 1987, human rights lawyer Gregorio Andolana was elected as the Representative for Cotabato's District 2, one of two PnB Congressmen elected. Two other activists from the Marcos-era "parliament of the streets", Rosario Diaz and Jose Tuburan, were elected as Governor and Vice-Governor in the 1988 local elections, running with PDP-Laban. In 1992, NGOs and POs aimed primarily to have all three reelected, effectively to preserve the *status quo*. Yet the task was far from simple. By 1992, Andolana had switched from PnB to the LDP (supporting Mitra in the Presidential campaign) while Diaz and Tuburan had moved to Lakas-NUCD. Diaz and Tuburan had also fallen out with

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[144] Soriano interview.

[145] Ibid.

Andolana.[146] NGOs and POs had also supported rival candidates in the 1988 local elections, allowing a "trapo" to win office as Mayor of Kidapawan, the provincial capital.[147] In 1992, NGOs had not only to unite among themselves but also had to broker a reconciliation between Andolana, Diaz and Tuburan so they could support and promote a united ticket. All three were reelected.

As in Bataan, PRRM could not participate directly in the electoral campaign. Concentrating on the 8 municipalities in its Sustainable Rural District however, PRRM helped to select "progressive" candidates and trained partner PO volunteers to conduct voter education campaigns. Partner POs also helped other provincial NGOs and POs to prepare a "Peoples Development Agenda" and promoted it as part of the voter education campaign.[148] PRRM estimates that in alliance with partner POs, its voter education campaign reached 10,000 voters (of North Cotabato's 750,000 population).[149] To limit electoral fraud, PRRM also targeted school teachers (who would count the votes) and canvassers independently of local progressive candidates. When word filtered through of traditional politicians dispensing electoral handouts in particular areas, PRRM sent voter education teams and passed word to offices of "progressive" candidates. Candidates' own campaign teams then descended on the areas.[150]

Experience in 1992, (and in 1988 to a lesser extent), according to Serrano, led MPD and PRRM to a four-fold electoral strategy: 1. transform POs into electoral coalitions such as *Kabalikatan*; 2. build alliances with local liberals, such as Diaz and Tuburan in North Cotabato; 3. master the technology of election campaigns; 4. appreciate the specific local

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[146] Nierras interview 18 October 1993.
[147] Barandino interview, 6 November 1993.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Nierras interview, 18 October 1993.
[150] Ibid.

electoral context. "When the game is football, you don't play by basketball rules", Soriano mused. Traditional left strategy of armed struggle and united front militancy, PRRM and MPD had decided, were inappropriate tactics for the demands of electoral struggle.

8. Participation in Local Government Structures.

Although not mentioned in the SRDDP Guide[151] as a tactic by which PRRM engages in advocacy, participation in local government structures has become an important component in PRRM's political strategy. PRRM participated in Regional Development Councils (RDCs) established by the National Economic and Development Authority in 1988 and PRRM staff assisted in the preparation of the final draft of the 1991 Local Government Code (LGC).[152] PRRM became involved in the Central Luzon RDC almost by accident. Charged with organising elections for the 10 NGO seats on the RDC, NEDA had no mailing list or other means of contacting NGOs in the provinces of Central Luzon and PRRM heard of the elections informally through a NEDA contact. On election day, PRRM coordinated with other progressive NGOs and POs and as a result, PRRM, along with 6 other progressive NGOs and POs (including local chapters of the *Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas* (KMP, Philippine Peasants Union) and the Citizens Disaster and Rehabilitation Centre (CDRC)) was elected.[153] When elections were held in 1992, however, for the Provincial Development Council of Bataan established under the 1991 LGC, PRRM heard of the election at a late stage. As a result, it was unable to coordinate election strategy with other progressive NGOs and was defeated after tying for the last seat.[154]

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[151] "Sustainable Rural District Development Programme: Development in the hands..."
[152] Morales interview, 23 November 1993.
[153] Dacanay interview, 29 April 1993.
[154] Dacanay interview, 25 October 1993.

In North Cotabato, PRRM joined the Provincial Peace Secretariat convened by the National Unification Commission (NUC) after the election of President Ramos in June 1992. PRRM also participates in the Peace and Order Council administered by the provincial Governor in cooperation with the Department of Interior and Local Government. In September 1993 it participated along with 80 other NGOs and POs (including an estimated 20 to 25 from the "progressive" and "cause-oriented" sector) in elections for 10 seats on the North Cotabato Provincial Development Council. In contrast to "traditional" NGOs such as the Cotabato Chamber of Commerce, PRRM coordinated strategy with other NGOs and won a seat, along with one other "progressive" NGO.[155] In addition, it participates in Municipal Development Councils (MDCs) in 6 of the 8 municipalities in its North Cotabato SRD, as well as 3 municipal health boards.[156]

PRRM's experiences in local government raise mixed emotions among staff. Bataan Branch Manager Lisa Dacanay represents PRRM and the environmental NGO sector on the Central Luzon RDC where she also heads the RDC sub-committee on coastal resources. NGOs, she argues, face a losing battle, swamped by the bureaucracy of elaborate consultation processes yet frustrated by the dominance of patronage concerns and the difficulty NGOs face in upholding elementary procedures. On 14 October 1993 for instance, the RDC voted 22-2 in favour of the controversial Masinloc coal-powered electricity generating station in Zambales which PRRM has long opposed. RDC procedures required a quorum of 50% of the 85 members (ie 43 votes) but PRRM's objections were swept aside by the RDC Chairman, the concurrent Governor of Zambales and one of the projects staunchest backers. Yet participation has also brought tangible gains. In 1993, when the Bataan branch encountered

[155] Raquiza interview.
[156] Barandino interview.

difficulties in negotiating with the Asian Development Bank and Department of Agriculture (DA) over changes to the Fisheries Sector Programme[157], PRRM turned to the RDC. After lobbying, the Coastal Resources Sub-committee, followed by the Committee on Economic Development and finally the Executive Committee of the RDC, passed resolutions calling for modifications, forcing the DA to establish a technical committee with PRRM representation.[158]

Experience in North Cotabato has been equally mixed. According to Raquiza, NGOs are marginalized from discussions on development projects which are effectively confined to the relevant local offices of government departments.[159] On the MDCs for Arakan and Antipas however, PRRM is actively involved in municipal development planning, ensuring that partner POs can participate in Barangay Development Councils. PRRM partner POs are represented on 12 Barangay Development Councils in the North Cotabato SRD and feedback on their experiences to date, PRRM says, has been largely positive. By late 1993, elections for NGO places on the provincial *sanggunian* (assemblies) had yet to take place but NGOs had already held discussions on common candidates.[160]

9. Relations with Government.

A key component of the SRDDP strategy involves PRRM "work[ing] for a government that is accountable, responsive, and democratic"[161] and since 1986, PRRM has become enmeshed in a complex web of relationships with the Philippine state. Soon after his

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[157] PRRM believed the programme was marred by disjointed planning and was ineffective in winning fishermen away from unsustainable fishing methods.

[158] Dacanay interview, 25 October 1993..

[159] Raquiza interview.

[160] Barandino interview.

[161] "Sustainable Rural District Development Program: Development in the hands...", pg. 42.

release in March 1986, Horacio Morales was offered the post of Under-Secretary for Economic Planning with the National Economic and Development Authority, but rejected it "because at that time we were still not sure that the Aquino government was really committed to a change of the system...from elite democracy to popular democracy".[162] Two months later however, Morales became a Consultant to the Presidential Committee on Government Reorganisation on a three month contract, tasked with making recommendations on the future of the Ministry of Human Settlements. "Shortly after I finished my work" Morales adds, "there was [a] red scare...people looking for [those] in the government who had connections to the movement in the past and a lot of high ranking officials under the Aquino government were removed". Throughout the remainder of the 1980s, PRRM remained effectively marginalized from the Aquino government. PRRM, Morales argues, "had to switch to a more critical stance when the scope for reform started to narrow down".[163]

Scope for reform however broadened dramatically following the election of Fidel Ramos in June 1992, especially when Ramos appointed former PRRM President Dr. Juan Flavier as Secretary for Health.[164] Flavier took charge of the Department of Health (DoH) at a critical stage in its history, charged with implementing the DoH's decentralization strategy under the terms of the 1991 Local Government Code.[165] With no experience of running a government department and faced with opposition from DoH mandarins opposed to decentralization, Flavier convened a group of 5 advisers including Horacio Morales which met daily for the first few weeks of Flavier's stewardship, then weekly. Flavier incurred

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[162] Morales interview, 2 August 1993.

[163] Morales, "Scaling Up NGO Impact...", pg. 7.

[164] Ramos was unable to reappoint outgoing Health Secretary Alan Bengzon because of a prohibition on appointing defeated Congressional candidates within one year of elections. Bengzon came 25th in the race for the Senate's 24 seats.

[165] Bengzon and his 2 departmental Under-Secretaries had bitterly opposed decentralization and DoH staff were seething with resentment at the government's plans.

significant opposition internally to his "kitchen cabinet" and to formalise his position, Morales became the head of the DoH's Task Force Devolution and a consultant to the DoH on an annual salary of P1.[166] Under the DoH's decentralization plan, 45,000 of its 75,000 staff would transfer to local government units, responsibility for 80% of bedspace would be devolved and the DoH would lose responsibility for half its budget of P10b; Morales' TFD was given 4 months to plan decentralization strategy.[167] Morales drafted PRRM Deputy Vice President Rose Nierras to help and although the TFD completed its work in December 1992, both Nierras and Morales retain close links with Flavier and the DoH.

PRRM's association with Flavier and the DoH raises interesting questions about the relationship between NGOs and the Philippine state. IPD's Cala argues that the Philippine state is effectively a series of patronage networks and thrives on transactional relationships. NGOs therefore run the risk, Cala adds, of spinning an alternative patronage web.[168] According to Morales, mutual trust is essential in developing relationships between NGOs and government ministries. If a minister is closely associated with a particular NGO, then trust is well established and underpins the relationship.[169] According to Nierras however, DoH relationships with NGOs differ significantly from those between NGOs and the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), where NGOs in CONVERGENCE feel disadvantaged by the DAR's close links with PBSP and PhilDHRRA. Under Flavier according to Nierras, 10 former NGO leaders have been brought into the DOH at grades of Service Director or higher, from a politically diverse range of NGOs including the Medical Action Group (MAG), *Kapwa Ko Mahal Ko* (I Love My Neighbour) and the United Nations Children's Emergency

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[166] Nierras interview, 8 October 1993.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Cala interview.
[169] Morales interview, 23 November 1993.

Fund-Philippines (UNICEF-Philippines). The success of the Task Force Devolution was partly credited to Flavier's participatory management style, according to Nierras, and led to the establishment of Joint Task Forces linking DoH and NGO/PO personnel to oversee DoH programmes such as the Community-Based Maternal and Child Health Care Programme and the Community-Based Health Financing Scheme. The DoH has also subcontracted a number of activities to NGOs including the preparation of ODA loan proposals. Overall, however PRRM does not receive special treatment from Flavier and the DoH and financially has only benefitted marginally from its partnership with the DoH.[170]

PRRM also works closely with other government departments including the Department of Agriculture where PRRM is a lead partner in the Asian Development Bank-funded Fisheries Sector Programme and the Department of Energy, with whom PRRM in alliance with other NGOs involved in Task Force Energy, is helping to prepare a Common Framework for Alternative Energy Development. Apart from the DoH, its closest relationship is with the DAR, especially at the local level. In North Cotabato for instance, PRRM is helping to establish an Agrarian Reform Community (ARC) in the three barangays of Makilala, one of the municipalities in PRRM's North Cotabato SRD and in 1993 helped establish a rubber co-operative processing plant producing slippers and other products. PRRM is also helping the DAR to identify land covered by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Programme in Kidapawan, Makilala, Mlang and Matalam where many of the beneficiaries are PRRM partner PO members.[171] In Nueva Vizcaya, PRRM mobilized local POs to construct a road linking a remote barangay to the provincial highway under contract to the

[170] PRRM has received no DoH funding directly although it has received funds for and on behalf of the DoH. USAID provided a grant to aid the work of the TFD, paid through the UP Economics Foundation to enable PRRM and the TFD to function without continual recourse to DoH funding (which could have enabled DoH staff to delay decentralization).

[171] Barandino interview, 6 November 1993.

Presidential Management Staff and it has also worked with Presidential Adviser on Rural Development Daniel Lacson in preparing provincial development plans.[172]

Despite the collaboration with government departments however, PRRM has staunchly criticized both the Aquino and Ramos administrations. PRRM has attacked the Ramos government's 1993-1998 Medium Term Philippine Development Plan for "its export-oriented and foreign investment-led growth strategy" which it argues will lead to further depletion of the nation's natural capital.[173] Yet it also supports aspects of Ramos's drive for Newly Industrializing Country (NIC) status, especially asset reform measures and the development of a more "activist/interventionist" government.[174] The approach reveals an ambiguous view of the state. On the one hand, Serrano argues, PRRM seeks "a strong state and a strong civil society", yet on the other it seeks to overcome civic inertia by reducing "citizens...dependence on state mediation".[175] "Philosophically", Serrano writes,

> NGOs envision an anarchist society: no government to lord it over the citizen, only an endless array of voluntary organisations transacting among themselves, and no politicians or politicians, ...only citizen diplomats. NGOs aim to disempower government step by step until it disappears.[176]

Most Philippine NGOs, Cala argues, aspire to being microcosm states[177] and PRRM is in many respects a perfect example. Morales for instance writes of co-operatives, economic organisations and community organisations federated into local People's Councils "which run parallel to, but interfac[e], with government"[178] and PRRM programmes include disaster

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[172] Nierras interview, 8 October. PRRM prepared a provincial development plan for Cotabato.

[173] "The Way of Power...", pp. 2-3.

[174] Ibid, pg. 4.

[175] Serrano, **On Civil Society**, pp. 46 & 56.

[176] Ibid, pg. 31

[177] Cala interview.

[178] Morales, "Scaling Up NGO Impact...", pg. 6.

relief, reforestation, livelihood projects, primary health care, credit schemes and education, supported by policy research and planning, mirroring the broad range of social services provided by the state.

10. Networking.

One of the most distinctive features of PRRM, setting it apart from most other Philippine NGOs, is its assiduous cultivation of contacts. In building its socio-economic programme since its relaunch in 1986, PRRM has established relationships with a vast array of foreign and Philippine funders[179] and critics both within and outside the organisation suggest that PRRM is heavily influenced by donor interests.[180] Virtually all Philippine NGOs try to forge relationships with national and local politicians and according to Rep. Bonifacio Gillego, most members of the House of Representatives tap NGO leaders as advisers and consultants.[181] Horacio Morales acted as adviser to Rep. Jose Yap when Yap participated in Aquino government peace initiatives and was appointed by President Ramos to the 1992-93 National Unification Commission.[182] Explaining the relationship, Morales

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[179] Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of 19 November 1990 for instance list 29 agencies funding existing PRRM projects or considering funding applications.

[180] According to minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting of 15 September 1987, Dr. Antonio Ledesma "inquired whether the [programmes] operate because of the dictates of funding agencies or because of a philosophy emanating from policy studies". More recently, PRRM has been criticized for working on Camiguin Island, Mindanao. Anonymous critics say the island is relatively prosperous, lies outside SRDDP operational areas, and that PRRM was motivated primarily by Spanish funding. PRRM concedes that the project resulted from an approach from Spanish NGOs and the Spanish Embassy but argues that local tourism and attendant prostitution necessitated a family planning and responsible parenthood project and that PRRM wanted to develop a sustainable development model appropriate to small islands (Nierras interview, 18 October 1993).

[181] Rep. Bonifacio Gillego, interview, Manila, 28 April 1993.

[182] Consolidating PRRM's influence in the peace process, former Board members Howard Dee and Vincente Jayme were named respectively in July and August 1993 as Chief Negotiator with the NDF-CPP-NPA and member of the National Amnesty Commission.

notes that "Congressman Yap is from my province [Tarlac] and related to my cousin".[183]

In many cases, PRRM has risked controversy to develop networks and personal relationships. In early 1993 for instance, Morales was instrumental in launching "Warriors for Peace", a group of former leaders of the CPP-NPA and RAM (*Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabayan*, the Revolutionary Nationalist Alliance, formerly the Reform the Armed Forces Movement), including former NPA Chief Romulo Kintanar, and former army Colonel and RAM leader Gregorio Honasan. With high-profile media appearances and basketball matches in remote barrios, "Warriors for Peace" undermined the bitter legacy of the Marcos dictatorship and provided momentum to peace negotiations between the government and CPP-NDF, yet Morales was widely criticized in national democratic circles.

Contacts are also cultivated assiduously at the local level. In 1991 for instance, PRRM invited Sen. Joseph Estrada to meet with partner POs in Ifugao and later negotiated a P1m contribution from Estrada's Countryside Development Fund.[184] In North Cotabato, PRRM maintains close personal ties with the Governor and Vice Governor, sustained through frequent social meetings, and the relationship helps PRRM to get privileged access to farm equipment, food subsidies or commodity loans from local government agencies.[185] The relationship was built on personal ties, and enables PRRM to play the pivotal role of conduit between other NGOs and the Governor.[186]

Close personalist ties are a double-edged sword however and provoke criticism from

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[183] Morales interview, 23 November 1993.

[184] Ramon Sales, interview, London, 12 August 1994.

[185] Barandino interview.

[186] Rose Nierras served as North Cotabato Branch Manager from January 1991 to July 1992 during which time she maintained close ties with Governor Diaz, cemented by an inter-family friendship. During Nierras's tenure, Diaz visited the PRRM office "practically every day" and Nierras frequently wrote speeches and policy papers for her (Nierras interview, 18 October 1993).

NGOs opposed to patronage-based politics. PRRM was widely criticized by other members of Task Force Apo Sandawa (TFAS) following a meeting between TFAS and President Ramos in Kidapawan on 23 January 1993, held to discuss TFAS objections to the proposed Mt. Apo geothermal electricity generating plant. Governor Diaz and PRRM liaised between TFAS and the Presidential Adviser for Mindanao to arrange the meeting. TFAS members however wanted to bring media representatives into the meeting and hold a rally and "voice barrage" outside, and accused PRRM of being "used" by the Governor when the demands were rejected.[187] PRRM's popular democratic philosophy of "wanting to accommodate everybody", one PRRM worker claims, inevitably leaves it open to attack.[188]

11. Conclusion.

For all the problems that have marred its history, PRRM is one of the Philippines' most successful NGOs. In the 1950s and 1960s, it established a remarkable reputation for institutional innovation: launching community development as a key weapon of government counterinsurgency policy; providing the model for the Presidential Arm on Community Development, three separate pieces of local government legislation, and later the *Samahang Nayon* programme; triggering the proliferation of Rural Reconstruction Movements throughout the developing world (Colombia, Ghana, Guatemala, India and Thailand). Like other civic organisations before it, PRRM also played an important role in mobilizing Protestant civic leaders.[189] Like its predecessor, the Chinese Mass Education Movement,

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[187] Barandino interview.

[188] Ibid.

[189] Rafael Salas (who later served as United Nations Under-Secretary) visiting PRRM in 1968 described it as "very successful in evolving techniques for motivating farmers in rice production...despite the fact that [it] is an organisation largely run by Protestants in a country which is 80% Catholic" (Rafael Salas, **More Grains: Participatory Management in the Philippine Rice Self-Sufficiency Program 1967-1969**, Simul Press, Tokyo, 1985, pg. 79).

PRRM's success was primarily in the political realm, undermining Sanyal's assertions in the introduction. More ambiguously perhaps, PRRM was significantly influenced by philanthropic and business elite interests and their support underpinned PRRM's impact on public policy reform. Equally however, elite influence was a restraining factor and contributed to PRRM's decline in the early 1970s and again in the early 80s.

Successful NGOs, as PRRM illustrates, are remarkably vulnerable to the machinations of states. PRRM growth in the 1950s was facilitated by the overhaul of legislation governing civic organisations in 1952 and collaboration with government agencies in counter-insurgency operations. Once the counter-insurgency threat had passed however, PRRM was marginalized by the PACD as President Magsaysay and his successors expanded the administrative machinery of the Philippine state. Similarly, Ferdinand Marcos used PRRM initially but marginalized the organisation when it threatened his interests, leading to its virtual collapse in 1984.

By 1993, PRRM had reclimbed to great heights. It had become one of the largest NGOs in the country, second only to PBSP, one of the few NGOs with nation-wide reach, and one of the most controversial. Critics argued that PRRM was project- and donor-driven;[190] excessively technocratic;[191] largely unsuccessful at community organising;[192]

These included Dr. Y.C. James Yen; Cornelia Balmaceda, the only Protestant to serve in the Quirino cabinet; Dr. Albino Sycip, until 1987, PRRM's key financial adviser; Dr. Juan Flavier, PRRM and later IIRR President; and Trustees Derek Holdsworth, George Potts and J.J. Wolahan (Benitez interview).

[190] In the late 1980s, according to one source, "Boy [Morales] would come back from Europe and tell staff that this or that funding agency was interested in funding a particular type of project and tell them to have a funding proposal ready to send off in 48 hours....staff felt this was the way policy was being made". Speaking in mid-1993, the source claimed that the problem had lessened in the previous two years (anonymous interview).

[191] According to one source, for instance, PRRM tends to overelaborate and overconceptualize its plans without waiting for actual experience to contribute (anonymous interview).

and insensitive to gender issues.[193] Others however pointed to major achievements. According to Cala, PRRM successfully altered power relations in Bataan and North Cotabato:

> In Bataan, the budget of the PRRM branch is bigger than the budget of the town of Orani.... politicians in Bataan are wary of PRRM and see it as a patronage machine that they can't match.[194]

"Before", Cala adds, "the NGO was in the margin of the inventories of political forces in the mainstream", but under Serrano and Morales, PRRM was successfully positioned as "a key participant political force".

As with PRRM in the 1950s, achievements in the late 1980s and early 1990s have been predominantly in the political realm. Political factors, especially the character and quality of relationships with related actors (state agencies, insurgent groups, members, other NGOs/POs, and funders), invariably dictate the fortunes of PRRM's socio-economic development programmes. Marivic Raquiza, PRRM's North Cotabato Branch manager from July 1992 to November 1993, when asked to analyze her work, concluded that she spent more time as a *political manager*, i.e., establishing and maintaining relationships with other NGOs/POs and government agencies, than she did as an *economic manager*, i.e., supervising PRRM's socio-economic programmes.[195] PRRM is itself a political manager. Rather than concrete socio-economic achievements, its main success in the period since 1986 has been to link a complex range of actors during the important post-authoritarian transition. Unlike the

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[192] PRRM, again according to anonymous sources, has sought advice from other ex-national democrat NGO leaders about reinvigorating its organising efforts, admitting that they have not met with the expected success.

[193] According to one former PRRM worker, sexual harassment of women staff has been a problem and on one occasion female staff erected placards in PRRM's head office to complain. Members also complain of PRRM's attitude to Women in Development, a problem acknowledged by Morales in his address at PRRM's 41st anniversary celebrations in Nueva Ecija, 23 July 1993.

[194] Cala interview.

[195] Raquiza interview.

old PRRM however, the rejuvenated organisation balanced elite influence with institutional linkages to government agencies, political parties and NGOs & POs, underlining the importance of two key factors in Sanyal's analysis. PRRM, Soriano argues, "is enmeshed in strategic alliances, many that the military support, transforming power relationships rather than just challenging for state power".[196]

PRRM's rejuvenation raises an interesting question however. Having rediscovered success, would its clothes be stolen once again by a Philippine state anxious to develop a "critical mass" of its own? In some respects, the threat has diminished. Since 1986, Philippine Presidents have sought to curb rather than expand the power of the bureaucracy, through privatization, decentralization and sub-contracting. NGOs, POs and the private sector are now enmeshed in a complex web of relationships and a significant political upheaval would be needed to cause them to unravel. On the other hand however, government agencies remain weak at community-organising and dependent on NGOs in implementing strategic programmes that confront entrenched elite interests, such as redistributive land reform or reforestation. In "Philippines 2000", the government is committed to an ambitious programme of economic development and frustration at slippage in the attainment of targets, especially in programmes involving NGOs, could lead to tension with NGOs and attempts to displace them by expanding government agencies.

PRRM is more vulnerable in the electoral and local government arenas. Political parties and traditional politicians do not see NGOs as a fundamental threat as of yet, in large part because their impact in electoral campaigns has been marginal to date. Results in the 1992 elections however suggested that their impact is growing quickly. As the PACD followed PRRM success in community organisation and mobilization, so its success in

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[196] Soriano interview.

educating and mobilizing voters and in monitoring election count centres will force political parties to establish local organisational bases. Equally, as NGOs and POs consolidate their participation in local government structures, so traditional political forces will become increasingly concerned. Gerry Bulatao's comments in Chapter 4 suggest that NGOs and POs themselves favour a more explicitly party-political project in future election campaigns. Should a political party with a significant local organisational base materialise, however, it would further underline the role of PRRM, and other NGOs, as important triggers of political change within and beyond the Philippine state.

CHAPTER SIX: Task Force Detainees of the Philippines.

1. Introduction.

Human rights non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have a long record of activity in the promotion and protection of international human rights standards. They were instrumental in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948,[1] and became important actors in the "international human rights regime" that evolved during the 1980s, giving rise to a substantial body of literature.[2] Studies of the intranational roles of human rights NGOs in the developing world are rarer however, and exist mainly in report or monograph form.[3] Yet, intranationally, as the following case-study illustrates, human rights NGOs have not only contributed to the protection and promotion of human rights standards, but have also eroded the legitimacy of authoritarian regimes, mobilized specific constituencies in support of opposition campaigns and shaped political discourse in post-authoritarian polities.

Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP) was founded in 1974 by the

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[1] David Weissbrodt, "The Contribution of International Non-Governmental Organisations to the Protection of Human Rights", in Theodore Meron (Ed.), **Human Rights in International Law: Legal and Policy Issues**, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1984, pp. 429-430.

[2] See, for instance, N.G. Onuf and Spike Peterson, "Human rights from an international regimes perspective", **Journal of International Affairs**, Vol. 37, 1984; Jack Donnelly, "International Human Rights: A Regime Analysis", **International Organisation**, Vol. 40, No. 3, 1986; and Conway Henderson, "Human rights and regimes: A bibliographic essay", **Human Rights Quarterly**, Vol. 10, 1988; For country-specific accounts, see for instance Alison Brysk, "From Above and Below: Social Movements, the International System, and Human Rights in Argentina", **Comparative Political Studies**, Vol. 26 No. 3, 1993 or G. Sidney Silliman, "Transnational Relations and Human Rights in the Philippines", **Pilipinas**, No. 16, Spring, 1991.

[3] See for instance, Cynthia Brown, **The Vicaria de la Solidaridad in Chile**, Americas Watch, New York, 1987; or Daniel Lev, "Legal Aid in Indonesia", Working Paper No. 44, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, Clayton, 1987, a study of the *Lembaga Bantuan Hukum* (Legal Aid Institute).

Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP), during a decade in which human rights NGOs "emerged as a notable international political force".[4] TFDP was one of the most militant NGOs of the Marcos era and its hitherto undocumented history represents an important contribution to the history and political science of the Marcos dictatorship. In 1993, it was the largest human rights NGO both in the Philippines and in the developing world as a whole.[5] The third largest NGO in the Philippines (behind Philippines Business for Social Progress (PBSP) and the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM)), TFDP had 288 staff and 82 offices in 69 of the Philippines' 72 provinces.

In important respects, TFDP differs from standard conceptions of a human rights NGO. Wiseberg, for instance, defines a human rights NGO as

> ...a private association which devotes significant resources to the promotion and protection of human rights, which is independent of both governmental and political groups that seek direct political power and which does not itself seek such power.[6]

Far from being independent of political groups that seek direct political power however, TFDP has a long history of support for the National Democratic Front (NDF), the united front of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), and despite changes to its mandate following the collapse of the Marcos dictatorship, remains an integral part of a larger social movement. In contrast to Wiseberg, TFDP Chairperson Sr. Mariani Dimaranan argues that human rights NGOs are inherently political:

> Campaigning against...violations of human rights is a subversive activity. It cannot therefore be effectively undertaken either by voluntary organisations which seek to make themselves acceptable to all governments by insisting they are impartial or apolitical or by United Nations Commissions which depend

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[4] Jack Donnelly, **International Human Rights**, Westview Press, Boulder, 1993, pg. 113.

[5] Following the closure of the *Vicaria de la Solidaridad* in November 1992.

[6] Laurie S. Wiseberg, "Protecting Human Rights Activists and NGOs: What Can Be Done?", **Human Rights Quarterly**, Vol. 13, 1991, pg. 529.

on the cooperation of the government concerned.[7]

This perspective was shaped by TFDP's experience of government repression during the Marcos dictatorship, and its support for the programme of the National Democratic Front. After 1986 however, TFDP became involved in wide-ranging relationships with government agencies as its legitimacy and influence was gradually acknowledged by the Aquino and Ramos governments. TFDP therefore represents a significant case-study of the antagonism between NGOs and the state during the Marcos dictatorship, the tentative *rapproachment* of the years 1986-1990 and the significant improvement in relationships that has developed since then. Equally however, TFDP illustrates important features of NGO politics beyond the state. TFDP relations with the Catholic Church and European donors point to the role of particular institutional forces in influencing the programmes and mandates of Philippine NGOs. More importantly however, TFDP points to the changing relationships between the underground left and formerly supportive NGOs, as the former fragments and the latter consolidate their influence in Philippine politics. TFDP thus illustrates important changes in Philippine politics and the important role played by Philippine NGOs.

2. TFDP, 1974-1986.

The establishment and consolidation of successful NGOs in the developing world is crucially dependent on forceful personalities. This applies especially to leading human rights NGOs, many of which emerged under conditions of severe repression in the 1970s. Personal dynamism and authority in themselves, however, were inadequate and institutional support

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[7] Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, "The International Human Rights Network: The Role and Function of International Human Rights Organisations", in Reynaldo Ty (Ed.), **Truth and Freedom: Understanding and Teaching Human Rights**, Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, Quezon City, 1990, pg. 59.

was essential in providing human rights NGOs with the legitimacy to confront authoritarian regimes and the moral authority to escape outright censure. The establishment and consolidation of TFDP is attributable in large part to the work of Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, its Chairperson since 1975. More importantly however, a tripartite alliance between important segments of the Catholic Church, underground activists of the NDF and foreign funders led by *Nederlandse Organisatie Voor Internationale Ontwikkefingssamenwerk* (NOVIB, the Netherlands Organisation for International Development) led to TFDP's emergence as the most influential human rights NGO in the Philippines.

The Catholic Church was the most important catalyst in the establishment of TFDP. Within weeks of the declaration of martial law on 21 March 1972, 30,000 people were imprisoned, mostly in Manila, and over subsequent months an estimated 20,000 political prisoners were detained at Camp Crame, headquarters of the Philippine Constabulary.[8] Catholic clergy numbered among those arrested and four foreign missionaries were told to leave the country in 1972.[9] In response, the AMRSP, with the support of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) organised a nationwide survey of conditions under martial law. In a report issued on 26 November 1973 to coincide with the launch of the Church-Military Liaison Committee (CMLC),[10] the AMRSP argued that

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[8] Jose Diokno, "Martial Law in the Philippines", lecture delivered at Amnesty International's International Council meeting, Cambridge, 21 September 1978, reprinted in Priscila S. Manalang (Ed.), **A Nation For Our Children: Selected Writings of Jose W. Diokno**, Claretian Publications, Quezon City, 1987, pg. 33; and Dolores Stephens Feria, **Project Sea Hawk: The Barbed Wire Journal**, Paper Tigers and Circle Publications, Manila, 1993, pg. 117.

[9] **Political Detainees in the Philippines**, Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines, Manila, n.d. [circa 1977], pg. 62, originally published as **Signs of the Times-Documentation**, Task Force Data Gathering, Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines, 31 March 1976.

[10] Established to reduce church-military tensions after raids on church establishments in mid-1973.

> There are no accurate estimates on the number of political prisoners, but all regions report that there are some. They are generally accused of subversion. There are frequent reports of physical torture from all regions of the country. The families and relatives of prisoners are kept under surveillance. Extortion money is asked of prisoners for their release in a number of regions.[11]

The survey's conclusions, especially the need for "safeguards in matters of arrest, detention and trial",[12] became the focal point of the AMRSP's annual convention in January 1974. Many religious superiors doubted the CMLC's ability to halt the torture of political detainees and during the convention, the AMRSP launched two "task forces" concerned specifically with human rights: Task Forces Detainees, to support the estimated 10,000 political detainees still imprisoned in December 1973,[13] and Task Force Data Gathering (TFDG), to monitor prison conditions and document cases of abuse.

Members of Christians for National Liberation (CNL), the largest constituent organisation in the underground National Democratic Front (NDF) played a significant role in the birth of TFDP, especially in the 1973 AMRSP survey. In late 1973, both the NDF and CNL were largely amorphous.[14] Prominent members, including Luis Jalandoni,[15] had fled Manila; those remaining were unable to maintain regular contact with comrades because of intense military surveillance; and most members were preoccupied with the anti-Marcos

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[11] "The Philippines: The Role of the Church under Martial Law- National Survey by the Major Religious Superiors", IDOC Bulletin, Nos. 15-16, January-February 1974 pg. 9 quoted in Robert L. Youngblood, **Marcos Against The Church: Economic Development and Political Repression in the Philippines**, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1990, pp. 158-159.

[12] **IDOC Bulletin**, ibid, pg. 13 cited in Youngblood, ibid, pg. 159.

[13] Diokno, "Martial Law...", pg. 33.

[14] Although CNL held a convention in July 1972, before the declaration of martial law, it was unable to hold another until 1981.

[15] A former priest and reputedly one of the first chairmen of the NDF Preparatory Commission, Jalandoni was arrested and imprisoned in the late 1970s. Released in 1986, he moved to Utrecht in the Netherlands where he became head of the NDF International Office.

constitution campaign.[16] Individual members however played an important role, including CNL founder Fr. Edicio de la Torre, Fr. Carlos "Calloy" Tayag,[17] and Fr. Gerardo Bulatao.[18]

The first head of TFDP was an American Jesuit, Fr. Mel Brady. In early 1975 however, Brady resigned due to overwork,[19] and in April, Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, one of the core group behind the 1973 AMRSP survey, was elected Chairperson in succession.[20] Born in Occidental Mindoro, Dimaranan studied at Manila's De La Salle University before moving to Holy Spirit College. With other nuns, she visited prominent Huk leaders in the Muntinlupa State Penitentiary in Manila including Luis Taruc and Alfredo Saulo. In the late 1960s, Dimaranan was assigned to St. Joseph's College in Manila where she became head of the Social Science Department and joined her own students in anti-Marcos and anti-US demonstrations. Using overseas church contacts, Dimaranan developed a "solidarity network" and, accused of being a member of CNL, was arrested on 20 October 1973.[21] Released on 6 December 1973, Dimaranan joined TFDP as secretary and adviser to Fr. Mel Brady.

From tiny beginnings, TFDP grew quickly under Dimaranan's dynamic stewardship

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[16] Anonymous interviews. In early 1974, many NDF members were involved in the campaign against a new constitution ratified by hastily-convened "Citizens Assemblies" in January 1973 and amended in a July 1973 referendum.

[17] Tayag, who "disappeared" in August 1976, played a central role in launching CNL in 1972, after converting de la Torre to the national democratic cause (anonymous interview).

[18] Anonymous interviews. Bulatao became Assistant Secretary General of the Association of Men Major Religious Superiors in May 1974.

[19] A canon law Instructor at Our Lady of the Angel seminary in Novaliches, Metro Manila, while part-time head of TFDP, Brady spent much of 1974 in prolonged and ultimately fruitless negotiations with the military on behalf of the Major Religious Superiors. Aware of the need for a full-time TFDP Chairperson, Brady resigned to focus on teaching commitments.

[20] Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, Chairperson, TFDP, interview, Manila, 21 July 1993.

[21] Brenda Gonzalez, "Sister Mariani and the Struggle for Human Rights", **Midweek**, 30 April 1986, pg. 27. "I didn't use the term 'solidarity network' then, but I maintained a type of network...outside the country", Dimaranan confirmed in 1993 (Dimaranan interview).

and by 1979 had helped 1,300 families and over 3,000 detainees in 60 prison camps.[22] In late 1974, TFDP had almost 200 volunteer nuns, and every Saturday an average of 25 would visit Manila's detainees.[23] By 1975 however, obstacles were increasingly raised against TFDP, especially through security alerts declared before scheduled visits. Unable to reach prisoners, volunteer nuns gradually left TFDP.[24] To professionalise the organisation and replace lost volunteer nuns, Dimaranan recruited ex-detainees as volunteers and paid staff.[25] The same year, in response to letters and requests from the provinces, Dimaranan travelled to Cebu and Mindanao (including Zamboanga, Cotabato, Davao, and Cagayan de Oro) to set up regional offices.[26] Bishop Antonio Nepomuceno provided an office in Cotabato and the Redemptorist Fathers provided one in Cebu. In Davao, Dimaranan established ties with the local, Maryknoll-run, Citizens Council for Justice and Peace (CCJP) leading to the establishment of another TFDP office.[27] As a result, by late 1975, TFDP had a handful of offices scattered throughout Mindanao and the Visayas.

Through Dimaranan, TFDP also established a pivotal relationship with the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) and its founder, Jose "Pepe" Diokno. Former Justice Secretary, Senator, and prominent Marcos critic, Diokno was arrested in the opening days of martial law. Released on 11 September 1974, he founded FLAG with four other lawyers in October 1974 to provide legal support to detainees and by 1982, FLAG had almost 100 lawyers

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[22] Letter from Sr. Mariani Dimaranan to NOVIB, 11 January 1979.

[23] Political Detainees in the Philippines, Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines, Manila, n.d. [circa 1977], pg. 67.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Dimaranan interview, 21 July 1993..

[26] Ibid.

[27] Under plans prepared by the Catholic Church's National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA), diocesan CCJP's would fill local CMLC panels. Local CMLCs however were only established in a small number of dioceses and Davao (along with Cebu) was one of the few places where a CCJP was actually established. (Youngblood, **Marcos Against the Church**..., pg. 84; **Political Detainees**..., pg. 66)

nationwide.[28] TFDP and FLAG intentionally complemented each other. While imprisoned, Diokno was kept informed of the AMRSP survey and the establishment of TFDP and TFDG and was visited frequently by TFDP volunteer nuns to whom he explained his plans for a lawyers organisation. Throughout the 1970s, TFDP aided FLAG financially and in the late 1970s, introduced FLAG to NOVIB, as the two organisations became, according to Dimaranan, "brother and sister".[29]

By 1979, TFDP had 42 offices in Mindanao (administered under the umbrella of the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference[30]) and the Visayas,[31] 47 staff and 200 volunteers.[32] In its early years, TFDP focused on the needs of detainees and their families, but from the late 1970s sought, firstly, "To support and strengthen the organisation of detainees, families and support groups towards national liberation" and secondly, "to promote the development of mass movements of concern against violations of human rights and expose and oppose escalating militarization".[33] In the five years since its birth, TFDP's political philosophy had evolved considerably. Many staff and volunteers were CNL members, providing the CPP with significant, albeit far from dominant, influence. "In the beginning", de la Torre noted

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[28] Maria Socorro Diokno, Secretary General, FLAG, interview, 29 March 1993; "History of the Free Legal Assistance Group", FLAG, n.d. [circa 1992], pg. 1.

[29] Dimaranan, interview, 21 July 1993;

[30] Until 1979 when it established its own organisational structures separate from the AMRSP and MSPC, TFDP relied on the MSPC to house its Mindanao Regional Office in Davao, to provide political direction, and to mobilise church support. In parts of Mindanao (especially Muslim areas) where TFDP had no offices, it relied on MSPC members based in diocesan social action centres to highlight abuses by contacting bishops and mobilising church support groups.

[31] 32 units, 6 sub-regional offices, and 4 regional offices. The National Centre in Manila looked after Luzon (Minutes of the Second National Administrative Board Meeting, 13-15 December 1979).

[32] Of the 47 staff, 17 were full-time and 30 part-time. (General letter from NOVIB to other European funders on behalf of TFDP, n.d. [circa April/May 1979].

[33] "Proceedings of the Second National Convention of TFDP, 8-11 August 1979", pg. 9.

in 1979, "TFDP was perfectly open, no secrets. But people's struggle got more sophisticated. [As] the military...got more sophisticated...we also became more sophisticated".[34]

From the late 1970s, when an estimated 2% to 3% of clergy supported the NDF,[35] TFDP philosophy firmly espoused the national democratic cause. "Experience under martial law", TFDP argued in 1979, "has shown conclusively that individual efforts to solve [the] problems...of political detainees are not enough. Individual efforts...to defend the rights of political detainees, to promote their welfare and secure releases must be **combined** with group action".[36] TFDP's fourth national convention was held under the rubric "*TFDP, One with the People's Struggle Towards Total Social Transformation*", NDF-speak for the revolutionary overthrow of the Marcos regime. Amid rising radicalism at the local level and a reaffirmation of the CPP's Marxist-Leninist-Mao Tse Tung Thought principles under Rodolfo Salas's chairmanship however, TFDP's National Centre grappled to defend its organisational autonomy. "TFDP", Dimaranan lectured the Convention,

> is an independent organisation. It must remain independent if it is to perform its functions effectively....TFDP workers...should not take [directives] from any other group or organisation.[37]

The CPP was not the only threat to TFDP autonomy, however; by the early 1980s, foreign funders were exerting significant influence over organisational structures, programme focus and financial management. In its early years, TFDP relied on volunteer labour with few fulltime staff and its main source of financial support was a P10,000 grant in 1975 from the

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[34] Edicio de la Torre, "Keynote Address" in "Proceedings of the Fourth National Annual Convention of TFDP, 19-23 October 1981", Appendix D, pg. 2.

[35] David Wurfel, **Filipino Politics: Development and Decay**, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1988, pg. 279.

[36] Emphasis from the original ("Proceedings of the TFDP Second National Convention...", pg. 13).

[37] Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, "TFDP National Organisational Situationer" in "Proceedings...Fourth National Annual Convention", Appendix I, pg. 4. In her address, Dimaranan listed measures workers should adopt to protect TFDP's integrity.

Women Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines.[38] In 1976 however, NOVIB approved a grant to TFDP, establishing a long relationship that aided TFDP's development. With extra European funding secured with the help of NOVIB, TFDP had income of P3.7m in 1981, 70% up on 1980.[39] As a result, European agencies formed a consortium to coordinate funding to TFDP in 1980, consolidating their already-significant influence.

Within the AMRSP, increased CPP influence in TFDP, and its militant opposition to the Marcos regime, estranged conservative superiors. By 1981, TFDP dwarfed the AMRSP in size, and though still formally a "working arm" of the AMRSP, now had its own organisational structures, weakening AMRSP oversight. Within the AMRSP, bitter debate waged about TFDP's status, and throughout 1981, the AMRSP held inconclusive discussions with TFDP and other task forces. For TFDP, working arm status represented a vital "moral umbrella" and before the AMRSP convention in August, staff launched an intensive lobby of AMRSP members to protect its link.[40] The AMRSP Convention decided to retain its relationship with TFDP and other working arms but the issue plagued AMRSP conventions for years to come.

In 1975, TFDP was tiny, "a small group of...[women religious] answering the needs of political detainees and their relatives...[visiting] camps, [preparing] documentation, organising detainees' relatives to [campaign for] releases, [producing] publication[s] and

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[38] Dimaranan interview, 21 July 1993.

[39] Letter from Sjef Theunis to Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, 20 July 1981; "NOVIB's Comments on the Task Force Detainees 1983-1984 Programme" n.d. [circa 1982]. Sensitive to the political implications, the Dutch Foreign Ministry expressed concern in 1979 at NOVIB being TFDP's main European funder (Letter from Sjef Theunis to Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, 8 February 1979) (Oxfam, Christian Aid and CAFOD however provided small amounts). NOVIB lobbied European funding agencies to broaden TFDP's funding base and by 1981, Oxfam, Christian Aid, and the Swiss Lenten Campaign were important funders.

[40] Minutes of the National Administrative Board Meeting, 9-11 March 1981.

education[al] [material], [even] babysitting detainees' children".[41] The work however was split between two organisations; TFDP, based in the Religious of the Virgin Mary compound in Cubao with volunteers drawn mainly from the women religious, and TFDG, from an office in Sta. Ana with mainly male volunteers. On 6 September 1974, TFDG launched its first publication, *Various Reports*, publicising cases of harassment of church figures and the torture and killing of political detainees.[42] Surreptitiously circulated among Catholic and Protestant clergy, *Various Reports* resulted in pressure from the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines on Marcos through the Church-Military Liaison Committee, forcing a categorical assurance from Marcos that, "No one, but no one, has been tortured".[43] Following a warning from the Chairman of the Philippine Council for Print Media (PCPM) to cease publication,[44] the name was changed, first to *ICHTHYS* (from the Greek "fish") and then to *Signs of the Times*,[45] but the changes failed to save TFDG.

In September 1976, Amnesty International (AI) issued a damning report, claiming 70% of political detainees it interviewed had been tortured. Under international pressure, the Philippine government responded in October 1976, querying AI's Philippine contacts and

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[41] Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, "Welcome Address", in "Reaffirming Our Commitment to the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights: Proceedings of the 10th National Convention of TFDP", Iloilo, 2-5 June 1993, Appendix A. Among the relatives seeking TFDP's help was Corazon Aquino whose husband Benigno mounted a hunger strike in April and May 1974 (Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, interview, 19 November 1993; **Political Detainees...**, pp. 80-81).

[42] The arrest of Fr. Edward Gerlock, a social action director in Davao del Norte in October 1973 and the death in custody of church lay worker Santiago Arce in September 1974 were among the first cases documented by VR (Political Detainees..., pp. 72-74). Early issues of VR were written by two human rights lawyers who achieved prominence during the Marcos dictatorship, Romeo Capulong and Raul Roco. After the fall of Marcos, Capulong became Counsel to the NDF while Roco was elected to the Senate in 1987 and 1992.

[43] In a nationwide radio and television address, 1 December 1974 (**Political Detainees in the Philippines**, Book 3, TFDP and AMRSP, Manila, n.d. [1978], pg. 2.).

[44] Under the terms of Presidential Decree 576, publications had to be licensed by the PCPM. See Youngblood, **Marcos Against the Church...**, pg. 119.

[45] De la Torre interview.

condemning "groups that would subvert and overthrow the Philippine government".[46] More dangerous to the government than TFDP because of its documentation work, TFDG's fate was sealed. On 5 December 1976, in a coordinated clampdown on the AMRSP, TFDG's office was raided and *Signs of the Times* was closed. As members of the Association of Men Major Religious Superiors (AMMRS) were arrested, others including TFDG publications manager Gerardo Bulatao went underground. In disarray, TFDG was subsumed within TFDP.

TFDP's support services to detainees and their families provided a natural constituency from which to organise Peoples Organisations (POs) and mobilize their members in support of human rights and other anti-government campaigns. Launched in 1974, TFDP's Self-Reliant Projects (SRP) programme provided loans of P500 to P2000 to families whose main wage earner was imprisoned, before being replaced in 1977 by Family Self Reliance Programmes (FSRP).[47] Rehabilitation projects were also launched in Metro Manila prison camps with help from the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), enabling detainees to produce painted T-shirts, pendants carved from cow bones, woven baskets and printed cards. As socio-economic programmes, SRPs and FSRPs were largely unsuccessful. Loans went unpaid and TFDP became embroiled in intermittent disputes with foreign funders about financial reporting. Their main success, Dimaranan argued, was to help families "gain the courage to face the military" and in 1978, TFDP launched *Kapisanan para sa Pagpapalaya at Amnestiya ng mga Detenidong Pulitikal* (KAPATID, Association for the Release and Amnesty of Political Detainees) with volunteers mobilized through the FSRP.[48]

From 1976, TFDP helped to pioneer one of the most successful tactics of the left in

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[46] **Report of an Amnesty International Mission to the Republic of the Philippines, 22 November-5 December 1975**, Second Edition, Amnesty International, London, 1977, pg. 69.

[47] Dimaranan letter, 11 January 1979.

[48] Ibid.

harassing the Marcos regime. On 5 January, Fr. Ed de la Torre and 17 other detainees went on hunger strike seeking house arrest status for two female detainees. Although not the first, the 76-day hunger strike was the most successful to date, promoting unity among detainees and undermining government denials about prison conditions. While TFDG spread word through *Signs of the Times* and refuted stories in the Marcos-controlled press, TFDP publicized the strike internationally and mobilized detainees' families in support.[49] Following negotiations at the Church-Military Liaison Committee meeting of 19 March 1976, the strike was called off and on 26 March, the two detainees were released under house arrest. Success however rippled beyond the immediate releases. According to Youngblood, the hunger strike "established that torture was indeed inflicted on some detainees, [and as a result] reports of punishment of abusive officers began to appear more frequently".[50] The strike represented the climax to a wave of 15 hunger strikes between 1973 and 1976 and further waves followed in 1978 (7 hunger strikes), and between September 1980 and February 1981. From 1981, hunger strikes, invariably successful in bringing releases or improved conditions, became a standard response to sudden spates of arrests.[51]

With the lifting of martial law on 17 January 1981, the character of human rights abuses, and consequently of TFDP strategy, changed dramatically. From 1972 to 1981, political arrests, torture, and deaths in detention represented TFDP's primary concern.[52]

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[49] Youngblood, **Marcos Against the Church...**, pg. 161; Dimaranan interview, 21 July 1993.

[50] Youngblood, ibid, pg. 164.

[51] **Pumipiglas: Political Detention and Military Atrocities in the Philippines 1981-1982**, Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, Quezon City, 1986, pg. 166.

[52] Between September 1972 and January 1981, almost 70,000 people were arrested and detained. By the end of 1981, 947 political detainees remained in prison (**Pumipiglas...**, pg. 19). With the end of martial law, military trials of detainees resumed and civil courts began to recommend bail for newly-arrested detainees ("Proceeding...Fourth National Annual Convention...", pg. 5)

From 1981 however, "salvagings" (extra-judicial killings, from the Tagalog *salbahe*, meaning nasty or bad), disappearances, massacres, bombings, "hamletting" (forcible relocation) and militarization became increasingly important concerns as battle between the Marcos dictatorship and the armed left intensified, and government policy towards TFDP hardened. TFDP's new strategy was reflected in its documentation. Its *Political Detainees* book series, published between 1976 and 1978 in the name of the AMRSP, concentrated meticulously on documenting arrests and ill-treatment and growing church concern.[53] Reflecting its more militant approach, *Pumipiglas* (Struggle or Struggling), a new series of books launched in 1981, documented abuses against peasants, workers and indigenous groups and the resultant "people's resistance", accompanied by a wide-ranging political and economic critique of the martial law regime.[54] In response, TFDP, along with KAPATID and a church solidarity organisation, the Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace (EMJP), was branded a "communist front" by the Department of National Defense in July 1981,[55] and in September 1982, TFDP's Sub-Regional Office in Iloilo was raided.[56]

Scope for political campaigning however was still determined by the exigencies of the organisation's other functions. In the early 1980s, campaigning (Indirect Service) was only one of five programmes and the others (Detainee Service, Family Service, Documentation and Publication and Administration) frequently operated under considerable pressure. In a wave of arrests between September and November 1982, 1,836 people were detained. Prisoners, both political and criminal, received inadequate food rations (equivalent to P6 a

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[53] Political Detainees...; **Political Detainees in the Philippines, Book 2**, Association of Major Religious Superiors, Manila, 1977; **Political Detainees...Book 3**.

[54] **Pumipiglas: Political Detention and Military Atrocities in the Philippines**, Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, Quezon City, 1981.

[55] In a front-page story carried by **The Sunday Express**, 2 August 1981.

[56] As part of a general clamp-down on church institutions suspected of anti-government activity in late 1982 (See Youngblood, **Marcos Against the Church...**, pg. 122).

day in 1983), forcing families to supply food or money to relatives in detention.[57] TFDP's DSP and FSP were swamped with requests for help and, as a result, TFDP launched a Food Assistance Programme in 1983 with help from European funders.

In 1983, the murder of Benigno Aquino transformed the Philippine political landscape, creating new opportunities for popular alliances. Human rights issues climbed the agendas of the Catholic church and moderate opposition in response to rising human rights violations (see Table 10) and human rights advocates were suddenly to the fore. Jose Diokno and Lorenzo Tanada, former nationalist Senators and founding lawyers of FLAG, spearheaded Justice for Aquino, Justice for All, (JAJA), a coalition uniting the moderate and radical opposition. Tanada also chaired the Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy (NAJFD) in which, like JAJA, moderate opposition leaders bowed to the organisational skills of the national democrats. With its "prestige, network of contacts and organisational resources", TFDP played a major role in launching the NAJFD and its regional chapters in Northern Luzon, Central Luzon, Bicol, Southern Tagalog, Negros, Panay, Cebu, Leyte, Samar and Mindanao (Davao, Cagayan de Oro, Cotabato, Ozamis and Butuan).[58] TFDP was also active in the JAJA political prisoners committee and maintained close ties with UNIDO (United Nationalist Democratic Organisation) and PDP-Laban (*Partido Demokratikong ng Pilipinas* (Philippine Democratic Party)-*Lakas ng Bayan* (Strength of the Nation)), the main opposition parties.[59] As a result, TFDP ensured that political prisoners and militarization remained prominent in their respective platforms and maintained the momentum of an issue around which opposition parties could unite.

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[57] "Food Assistance Project Proposal, 1983-1984", n.d.

[58] Oscar Francisco, "Assessment of the Indirect Services Program of the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines for NOVIB", April 1984, pg. 15.

[59] Ibid, pg. 16.

TFDP was already an active member of the Philippine Coalition for Human Rights (PhCHR),[60] formed in 1980 by lawyers from FLAG and MABINI (Movement of Attorneys for Brotherhood, Integrity and Nationalism Inc.[61]). PhCHR was envisaged as a leading coalition of human rights advocates but failed to take off. On 20 April 1983 however, the Supreme Court supported the continued detention of prisoners held under Presidential Commitment Orders (PCOs), effectively legalising warrantless arrests.[62] On 5 May, PhCHR held a special forum, under the banner "Scrap the PCO and replace [sic] the writ [of Habeas Corpus]", attended by 80 Manila-based human rights and other organisations, including TFDP and KAPATID, launching the Movement to Abolish the PCO (MAPCO). TFDP was a member of the organising committee and played a prominent role in subsequent activities.[63]

Throughout the 1970s, Jose Diokno notes, TFDP "helped...awaken public opinion in the United States to the iniquity and injustice, the hardship and degradation that support by their government help[ed] the martial law regime perpetrate on the Filipino people". US-Philippine relations, Diokno argued, provided TFDP with "an unexpected weapon".[64] During the early 1980s, TFDP developed the role further through personal visits by Dimaranan and other staff, its regular magazine *Quarterly Report*, and later, *Philippine*

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[60] PhCHR, rather than PCHR as its full name was abbreviated, is used here to distinguish it from the Presidential Committee on Human Rights established in 1986.

[61] MABINI, composed mainly of FLAG lawyers, was established in part because Jose Diokno was reluctant to allow FLAG to become engaged in overt campaigning. The organisation was named after Apolinario Mabini, a prominent leader of the 1898 revolution.

[62] PCO's dated formally to the enactment of Letter of Instruction 1125-A in May 1981. LOI 1125-A had since been amended by LOI 1211, abolishing the requirement for a warrant of arrest.

[63] "TFDP Semi-Annual Report (January-June 1983)". MAPCO also campaigned against Presidential Decree 1834 which converted national security crimes into capital offenses and PD1835 which codified anti-subversion laws and imposed capital punishment for subversion.

[64] Diokno, "Martial Law...", pg. 36.

Human Rights Update, and assistance to visiting American fact-finding missions (including the International Association of Democratic Lawyers in 1984 and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights in 1983 and 1985).[65] Enhancing its credibility, TFDP statistics were used by the State Department in annual human rights reports to Congress after 1983.[66]

The atmosphere of terror under which TFDP laboured, combined with its attachment to the national democratic cause, led to profound, often disturbing, dilemmas, as an organisation devoted to protecting human rights sought to rationalise, if not legitimise, a systematic slaughter of underground and NGO/PO activists. In late 1985, the CPP killed over 200 cadres, 130 in Mindanao alone, suspected of being "Deep Penetration Agents" (DPAs) (government spies).[67] TFDP helped to exhume bodies, collated information about missing activists and helped their families, and some TFDP workers suffered directly as spouses and relatives were killed.[68] Questions were also raised, however, about TFDP's role leading up to, and during, the purges.[69] According to the CPP, the purges began in late 1985 when "leading cadre...became convinced that large numbers of enemy deep penetration agents had infiltrated the party over a long period of time through white area organisations".[70] TFDP was one of the first organisations to raise the alarm. In 1979, after an inspection visit by

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[65] See Silliman, "Transnational Relations...", pp. 66-69, and Youngblood, **Marcos Against the Church...**, pg. 167.

[66] Richard D. Fisher Jr., "Debate Over a Philippine Rights Group", **Asian Wall Street Journal**, 10 April 1989.

[67] "Divided They May Fall", **The Economist** (London), 24 May 1986; "Reaffirm Our Basic Principles and Rectify Errors", Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines, July 1992, pp. 31-33. Former Mindanao Commission members Ricardo Reyes and Benjamin de Vera and former NPA Chief of Staff Romulo Kintanar were widely blamed for orchestrating the purge.

[68] **The Manila Times**, 13 May 1986; anonymous interview.

[69] See for instance "Purifying the Party: The aims, objectives and methods of the Communist Party of the Philippines", **The Pacific Newsletter**, (Newsletter of the Pacific Division of the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade), Edition 492, n.d. [circa 1992].

[70] "Reaffirm Our...", pg. 32.

Dimaranan, TFDP closed its Ozamis City unit and dismissed three staff amid fears of DPA infiltration.[71] Six months later, the unit was reopened with one worker.[72] Throughout the early 1980's, TFDP units endured intimidation from criminal gangs, fanatical religious cults and the private armies of landlords, especially in Mindanao, leading to a "low profile posture" in parts of the country for much of 1983. Writing to NOVIB in July 1983, Dimaranan noted

> I don't know what [will] happen to our Mindanao Regional Office in Davao [or] other TFDP offices. Military raids are very much in the air now...Though these things might be inevitable sooner or later, we try to keep on working quietly without inviting their attention.[73]

Two years later, in 1985, two TFDP staff were killed in separate circumstances; Jesus "Zaldy" Maglantay, 24, killed in Kalibo, Panay on 2 August by soldiers of the 313th PC Company after they arrested him at his boarding house, and Eufrocino Inamarga shot dead by a Civilian Home Defence Force (CHDF) member.[74] Another TFDP worker, Albert "Abet" Enriquez, "disappeared" after being kidnapped on 29 August and reportedly detained in Lucena City's Camp Nakar.[75] Fears about the organisation's security, in particular, the threat of DPA infiltration, increased from late 1985. In 1986, TFDP documented a massacre in Mindanao of 50 activists suspected of military links, by the NPA. "In 1985", TFDP reported at the same time however, "the New People's Army discovered ...DPAs... within their ranks. These [DPAs had] infiltrated the ranks of the insurgents so skilfully that it took

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[71] Dimaranan reputedly found staff openly fraternizing with armed NPA guerillas (anonymous interviews). According to another source, staff resigned because they were closely associated with suspected DPAs, affecting the unit's credibility. Infiltration of the unit itself, the source claims, was never confirmed.

[72] TFDP file "Administration 1979".

[73] Letter from Sr. Mariani Dimaranan to Peter de Haan, 21 July 1983.

[74] TFDP feature in **Malaya**, 10 December 1986.

[75] See **The Philippine Tribune**, 3 May 1986. The suspected killers later fled to Canada. Attempts by Philippine authorities to have them extradited to stand trial proved unsuccessful.

until 1985 for the NPA to discover the 10-year old scheme...the NPA is now in the process of purging [them]".[76] Even as late as April 1986, when the deaths were beginning to ebb, TFDP reported "an increase in the number of "Zombies" (DPAs) in Iligan City, Agusan, Butuan and part of Surigao".[77]

Difficulties arising from the atmosphere of repression under which TFDP laboured were exacerbated by organisational tensions. TFDP's Indirect Service Programme (ISP) had grown substantially during the 1980s: TFDP was active in alliance work, support group building and action committees (including "Free...Committees" for Jose Maria Sison, Fidel Agcaoili, Satur Ocampo, Edicio de la Torre and Horacio Morales). The ISP also organised forums and symposia; assisted and sustained sectoral organisations (POs) that it had helped establish (especially KAPATID, *Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainees Laban sa Detensiyon at para sa Amnestiya*, [SELDA, Association of Ex-Detainees against Detention and for Amnesty, established in 1985], and Mothers and Relatives Against Tyranny and Repression [MARTYR]); organised Fact Finding Missions; maintained international solidarity campaigns; and organised prison visits for middle-class organisations.[78] Other programmes, especially documentation, had suffered however[79] and the ISP was effectively operating autonomously from core programmes such as detainee and family support.[80]

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[76] **Philippine Human Rights Update** (PHRU), Vol. 2 No. 2, October-November 1986, pp. 8-9. The article was written in the early months of 1986.

[77] Minutes of the National Board Meeting of 6 April 1986.

[78] Francisco, "Assessment of ...Indirect Service...", pp. 5-13.

[79] According to a NOVIB report, information was often irretrievable and TFDP's concept of documentation (effectively "everything to do with paper") too broad (See Thoolen, "Report on...(TFDP)", pg 8). Interviewed on 21 July 1993, Dimaranan acknowledged problems with TFDP documentation before 1986, including faulty tabulations and double counting (eg. detainees listed under their own, plus their "underground", name).

[80] Francisco, "Assessment of...Indirect Service...", pg. 22.

3. TFDP, 1986-1993.

TFDP was caught unawares by the events of February 1986. First, like other organisations in the national democratic camp, TFDP supported the boycott of the 7 February Presidential election called by the CPP-NDF in the expectation that electoral fraud would enable Marcos to retain the presidency. Consequently, during the "People Power" revolt of 22-25 February when church leaders camped on EDSA (Epifanio De los Santos Avenue), TFDP Chairperson Sr. Mariani Dimaranan was in Europe, mobilising support for a projected new cycle of confrontation with the Marcos regime. Second, an American magazine article in December 1985 accused TFDP of being "openly pro-communist".[81] Serialised in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, the article claimed that TFDP "inflated the extent of political violence for which the government is responsible" and "conscious[ly]...suppress[ed]" details of cases it documented "for political reasons".[82] TFDP spent late December and January contacting Philippine and foreign supporters to counteract the article, diverting attention from broader events.[83] Third, TFDP was caught by the rapid pace of events after 25 February. On 1 March, CPP founding Chairman Jose Maria Sison and other prominent detainees were released. Within days, 218 political prisoners were released nationwide,[84] overwhelming TFDP's Direct Service Programme with requests to arrange accommodation for released detainees, medical and psychiatric treatment for those who had been tortured, organise press conferences, and to help families to contact released relatives.

Along with these immediate problems however, Aquino's assumption of the

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[81] Ross Munro, "The New Khmer Rouge", **Commentary**, December 1985, pg. 22.

[82] Ibid, pg. 23.

[83] "Task Force Detainees of the Philippines on Ross H. Munro Article", TFDP statement, 28 January 1986; Fidel Agcaoili, letter to the editor, **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 21 December 1985.

[84] Gonzalez, "Sister Mariani...", pg. 28.

presidency presented TFDP with a number of dilemmas. First, human rights had been a key plank in Aquino's election manifesto and in response, hundreds of local and regional human rights organisation were established nationwide following the collapse of the Marcos regime. TFDP therefore risked marginalization and the fragmentation of the national democratic-aligned human rights movement that it had built. Second, TFDP had to refine its mandate. TFDP openly supported the NDF from the late 1970s until 1986, but the new regime conditions created pressure on TFDP to distance itself from the NDF and redefine its role as a human rights organisation. Third, with a government committed to the establishment of new institutions and mechanisms to protect human rights, TFDP would now have to engage the state in direct relationships, in contrast to the militant opposition to the state that had previously defined its stance.

In 1986, TFDP's National Assembly approved a written constitution, by-laws and a statement of principles; TFDP registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission; and an external auditor was appointed for the first time. TFDP's National Board also established a Task Force Regionalisation to strip out an entire tier of bureaucracy; created new departments to handle finance, planning, monitoring and evaluation, and human resource development; and agreed new decision-making procedures. In May 1987, under pressure from funding consortium members, two consultants were appointed to sit in on National Board meetings and in August 1987, an Advisory Board was established, composed of Horacio Morales, Ed Garcia and Bishop Julio Labayen. Membership of TFDP's National Administrative Board and its successor, the National Board, were traditionally confined to staff, a function of the traditional sensitivity of TFDP's work and political empathies, but the 1987 changes introduced significant new thinking and pressures.

In 1992, however, the most significant change occurred, when Sr. Mariani

Dimaranan, TFDP's unrivalled head since 1975, was replaced as head of TFDP. Sr. Cres Lucero, former head of Education Forum, another AMRSP'task force, assumed the new office of Executive Director. Dimaranan remained as Chairperson but *de facto* power now lay with Lucero. Illustrating the complex institutional forces and alliances which underpin large NGOs such as TFDP, the transition was initiated by an unlikely alliance between the CPP and foreign funders, brokered by Advisory Board Chairman Horacio Morales.[85] The CPP-NDF remained an important influence in TFDP after 1986, and became restive with Dimaranan's increasingly outspoken and truculent style.[86] European funders were also frustrated by Dimaranan's personal grip over TFDP, and an almost dictatorial management style that stymied organisational and strategic change.[87] Implementation of the regionalisation policy depended on a similar alliance, as senior CPP-NDF leaders, concerned to curb the activities of renegades in Mindanao,[88] sided with European donors who sought increased efficiency.

Under Lucero's stewardship, the institution-building thrust was consolidated. Regionalisation was completed, replacing the former regional and sub-regional tiers with 13 new regional offices. Programme implementation was improved with the appointment of a Deputy Executive Director with responsibility for Operations. Decision-making and

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[85] Anonymous sources confirm that Morales' authority played a key role in persuading Dimaranan to step aside.

[86] According to former CPP Executive Committee member Isagani Serrano, Dimaranan epitomised a strain of thought among the religious with which the CPP frequently found it difficult to cope, undermining progress towards a more formal united front. "Because of the hegemony of the movement and the type of prestige its leadership has developed, even independent people..believe in what...the leadership are saying. That goes as well for Sr. Mariani, but then she resist[s] also...[and] does what she wants to do....I guess her adamancy grew because times changed also" (Isagani Serrano, interview, 23 November 1993).

[87] Anonymous interviews.

[88] CPP/NDF leaders also promoted regionalisation in other organisations in which it was influential, notably KMP, to control Mindanao members (anonymous interview).

accountability were improved with the creation of a Board of Trustees (BoT) and a separate National Management Committee (NAMANCOM).[89] TFDP's finances were also restructured. Administration expenses (planning, monitoring & evaluation, finance, human resource development) as a percentage of overall expenditure fell from almost 40% in 1991 to 29% in 1992 and the percentage of total funding (including counterpart funding such as services and materials) raised within the Philippines rose from 9% in 1990 to 21% in 1992.[90] According to staff, the changes brought significant benefits; better communication between units and the national centre; improved liaison with local government units,[91] (see below); more manageable workloads for regional directors; and improved overall management.[92]

Institution-building proved controversial however and pitted political forces in a battle for influence in TFDP. One of the main battle grounds was regionalisation, pitting the National Centre against more radical staff, especially in Mindanao. Mindanao, previously administered by a regional office in Davao City, was divided into three regions, each with a Regional Director answerable to Manila. Mindanao staff claimed the reforms undermined TFDP's ability to mount Mindanao-wide campaigns, and to liaise with other mass organisations with island-wide structures and curbed the significant autonomy which the Mindanao region previously enjoyed.[93] In response, the National Centre established an Inter-

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[89] See " [TFDP] Advisory Team Interim Report", February 1992, pp. 7-9.

[90] Sr. Cres Lucero, "Presentation of Three-Year Strategic Assessment 1990-93" in "Proceedings...10th National Convention", Appendix E.

[91] The new region structure closely parallels local government regions.

[92] Victoria Torre-Campo, Unit Supervisor, TFDP Bacolod, interview, Bacolod, 2 November 1993; Danilo Caspe, Regional Director-Southern Mindanao, TFDP, interview, Davao City,4 November 1993.

[93] Traditionally, CPP influence within TFDP was at its greatest in Mindanao. Regionalisation thus sparked an important political struggle within TFDP (anonymous interviews).

Regional Coordinating Committee (IRCC) in Mindanao,[94] but Mindanao staff were unhappy that the IRCC had no budget or decision-making powers.[95]

Relations between the National Centre (NC) and regions is an enduring source of tension within TFDP, especially over finance. Regional offices or units have approached foreign funders in the past without informing the NC.[96] Other units failed to submit regular financial reports and in 1990, a "No report, no subsidy" policy was introduced to improve financial control.[97] TFDP is unusual among Philippine NGOs in the degree of authority the NC exerts over regional offices, a crucial mechanism by which political empathy for the national democratic cause is subordinated to institutional prerogatives. To maintain control and monitor programme implementation, senior staff visit regional offices and units regularly.

Socio-economic programmes have been another source of controversy. TFDP is unusual among Philippine NGOs in its commitment to focus and, in contrast to PRRM, has resisted broadening programme range. Income-generating projects (IGPs), for instance, boosted beneficiaries' morale and served as a valuable springboard for organising. Senior TFDP staff felt however that IGPs also engendered dependency and were undermined by poor staff skills and inadequate capital.[98] By 1988/89, TFDP had more than 100 IGPs operating nationwide but in October 1989, the National Board ended IGPs as a major programme thrust.[99] Similarly, in 1989, TFDP closed *Tulong-Laya*, its rehabilitation centre for released

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[94] Lucero acknowledges that the reduced ability to mount Mindanao-wide campaigns was the main disadvantage of the regionalisation process (interview, 18 October 1993).

[95] Caspe interview.

[96] Minutes of National Board meeting, 24-28 July 1989.

[97] Minutes of the expanded National Board meeting, 22-26 January 1990; "Proceedings...10th Convention", pg. 7.

[98] "TFDP-Luzon Progress Report January-June 1987".

[99] The board decided to end central funding to IGPs, to transfer large projects to co-operatives and to fund existing IGPs from project repayments only ("Semi-Annual Report, July-December 1989", pg. 8); Minutes of National Board meeting 25-28 July 1988.

detainees, and transferred its functions to other organisations including KAPATID, the AMRSP Sanctuary Desk and the Medical Action Group (MAG).[100]

Despite this determination to concentrate on its core tasks of documentation and campaigning however, TFDP has been forced to maintain ancillary schemes, illustrating the enormous pressures on NGOs to complement inadequate state services. With funding from the European Community worth P10m in 1993-94, TFDP supplemented the food allowances political prisoners receive from prison authorities (P8.50 a day or P250 a month) with an additional P250 per prisoner per month, and arranged lawyers for political prisoners unable to secure a Public Attorneys Office (PAO) lawyer.[101]

TFDP grew significantly during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Income doubled between 1990 and 1993,[102] although staff size remained constant.[103] By the end of 1992,

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[100] "Semi-Annual Report, July-December 1989", pg. 9.

[101] NOVIB ended Food Aid support to TFDP in mid-1993, causing tension. TFDP maintained the allowances however, placing considerable pressure on its other programmes. EC aid funds legal assistance and a campaign to improve prison conditions (Sr. Cres Lucero, interview, 18 October 1993). Since 1989, when human rights lawyers were killed in unprecedented numbers (see Chapter 3), TFDP has found it increasingly difficult to secure lawyers for political prisoners. Of 37 political prisoners in Bacolod Provincial Jail in November 1993 for instance, only 14 had a PAO lawyer (8 had FLAG lawyers while 15 had other human rights lawyers). Where judges are unable to arrange a PAO lawyer, TFDP can sometimes arrange one. Those with PAO lawyers however resent them because of their reluctance to visit the prison or keep them informed of the progress of their case. Inevitably, supplementary food aid leads criminal prisoners to seek political status. In Bacolod Provincial Jail, TFDP withdrew entitlements from 2 prisoners who claimed their offenses were politically-motivated following representations from other political prisoners. Political prisoners, some seriously injured, also rely almost exclusively on TFDP and KAPATID for medical care. One prisoner for instance was returned to prison prematurely and without antibiotics after a leg amputation. By 2 November he had been without antibiotics for a month, had an infected wound and was in considerable pain. TFDP and KAPATID however could not obtain medicine without a prescription or permission to have the prisoner seen by a doctor (Group interview with 21 political prisoners in Bacolod Provincial Jail, 2 November 1993. Hereafter, BPJ interviews).

[102] "Proceedings...10th National Convention", Graph 1.

[103] TFDP had 277 staff in 1987, 285 in 1989 and 288 at the end of 1992 (Oscar Francisco and Jose Zalaquett, "Evaluation of Task Force Detainees of the Philippines", TFDP/NOVIB, October 1987, pg. 21; Minutes of the National Board meeting, 26-28 April 1989; "TFDP

TFDP had 82 offices nationwide with units in 69 of the country's 72 provinces (including 5 units in predominantly Muslim areas),[104] giving it the most extensive nationwide network of any Philippine NGO. Institution-building played a major role in attracting the necessary donor confidence, but as the following sections trace, refinements in its philosophy and its programme of political action, led to growing influence and legitimacy.

4. TFDP and Philippine Politics: Philosophy and Implementation.

TFDP philosophy, enshrined in its January 1986 constitution, commits it to (1) the inviolable dignity of the human person and the inalienable right to life, freedom and development; (2) "the Gospel's preferential option for the poor, deprived and oppressed"; (3) "active, critical and creative participation in the historical process of social transformation"; and (4) adherence to international human rights and humanitarian law.[105] As with PRRM, the evolution of that philosophy during the late 1980s and early 1990s was influenced by its traditional mission, the role of authoritative leaders (notably Srs. Dimaranan and Lucero) and the need to reconcile institutional interests represented in its decision-making processes. TFDP's philosophy however legitimizes an extensive programme of political action in pursuit

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End-of-Year Report, July-December 1992, pg. 24).

[104] Sr. Cres Lucero, "Prospects for Peace and Human Rights in the Philippines", talk given at the Philippine Resource Centre, London, 22 February 1993, (author's own notes). The 5 units are located in Isulan, Iligan City, Zamboanga City, Cotabato City and Marawi City. TFDP operations in Muslim areas have traditionally depended on a number of factors, including: (1) relations between the CPP and Moro National Liberation Force (MNLF); (2) relations between Muslim and Christian religious leaders; (3) relations between TFDP and Muslim NGOs, notably the Manila-based Moro Human Rights Centre (MHRC); and (4) human rights abuse patterns in Muslim areas. TFDP first established units in Muslim Mindanao in 1979 (in Iligan, Cotabato and Zamboanga cities) and in 1993, the National Convention approved the establishment of a Regional Office (Central Mindanao) responsible for Muslim areas (including Sultan Kudarat, Zamboanga City, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Marawi, Lanao provinces and Cotabato City) (See "Proceedings...10th National Convention", pp. 35-37 and Appendix H).

[105] TFDP Constitution, Part II, "Guiding Principles", in "[TFDP] Membership Manual".

of goals that exceed a strict concern with human rights, accentuating the dilemmas.

In the first year of the Aquino administration, TFDP came under enormous pressure from foreign funders, Philippine and international human rights organisations, and former human rights lawyers in the Aquino government to confine its mandate to human rights concerns and to demonstrate political impartiality by documenting NPA abuses. In October 1987, NOVIB criticized TFDP for demanding the unconditional release of political prisoners where proper treatment and fair trials were more appropriate demands, and for indiscriminate condemnation of military operations permitted under international humanitarian law (eg. civilian evacuations and displacements).[106] In particular however, the report called for "a human rights movement or organisation that is clearly separate and distinct in objective and mandate from political parties or broader political movements".[107]

At the National Board meeting of 26-28 August 1987, TFDP approved a defiant statement in response, published as an advertisement in the national daily *Malaya* in October 1987. TFDP rejected pressure to document rebel abuses,[108] and defended its "preferential option for the poor".[109] The NOVIB report however made clear that TFDP was expected to initiate a thorough review of its mandate and programmes and TFDP's May 1988 National Convention agreed significant changes. "[W]orking for human rights and not political actions is TFDP's contribution to the attainment of a [just] society", the Convention decided.[110] Resolutions calling for evacuations, displacements etc. to be documented with reference to

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[106] Francisco and Zalaquett, "Evaluation of [TFDP]", pp. 16-18.

[107] Ibid, pg. 34.

[108] Rebel offenses, TFDP argued, were already punishable under criminal and national security legislation, reducing the issue to one of enforcement. TFDP also pointed out that it did not document deaths or injuries among NPA guerillas in legitimate encounters with the AFP.

[109] "So You May Know", reproduced in "[TFDP] Membership Manual", pp. 25-29.

[110] "Developments in TFDP Work Pertinent to the Recommendations From The Francisco-Zalaquett Evaluation", n.d. [late 1988].

international humanitarian law, and mandating changes to TFDP's Human Rights Lexicon, were also approved.[111] Behind the scenes, however, TFDP resented the pressure, and the changes, in many respects, represented a damage limitation exercise designed to maintain TFDP's strategic orientation.[112]

In 1989 however, TFDP came under greater pressure to clarify its mandate. On 25 June, the NPA killed 37 people in Digos, Davao del Sur. TFDP participated in a fact-finding mission with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), to which the dead were all attached. On 28 June, UCCP blamed the massacre on the NPA,[113] while the NPA claimed self-defence.[114] With links to both the UCCP and NDF, TFDP dwelled on its response and was denounced by the press. On 4 July, TFDP's National Centre finally responded, condemning the "senseless killings". "It should be emphasised", the statement qualified, "that TFDP is against all acts of violence against unarmed civilians...committed by agents of the state or rebels".[115] Deepening the crisis, TFDP's Mindanao regional office issued a statement two days later attributing the deaths to a firefight between Bogobo-Itoman cultists and the NPA,[116] a defiant last gesture before regionalisation.

In 1986, when Marcos loyalists were arrested and detained on political grounds, TFDP resolved to document cases, but not to campaign for their release. "It must be made clear" an internal TFDP document noted, "that TFDP has a historical bias which affects our

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[111] Ibid. The new lexicon was published in the March-April and April-May 1988 issues of **Philippine Human Rights Update**, both published after the Convention.

[112] According to Dimaranan, for instance, the creation of a Board of Trustees, enabled TFDP to circumvent many of the report's recommendations (Dimaranan interview, 19 November 1993).

[113] UCCP Press Statement, 28 June 1989. The statement pointed out that of the 37 killed, 23 were female and 21 under the age of 19.

[114] NDF statement dated simply "June 1989".

[115] TFDP National Centre Press Release, 4 July 1989.

[116] TFDP-Mindanao Press Statement, 6 July 1989.

treatment of the "loyalists"".[117] In 1988, TFDP noted that it was open to using international humanitarian law "to reflect the reality of armed conflict", but argued that such a policy risked promoting belligerency status for the NPA under international law, and jeopardized the safety of workers obliged to enter rebel-held or contested areas.[118] Individual units were given the discretion to document humanitarian law abuses but documentation was not systemized at the national level,[119] a compromise that contained pressures in particular regions. The Digos Massacre however, along with Operation Missing Link, (another bout of purges within the CPP in Mindanao and Southern Tagalog), crystallized TFDP's adherence to international humanitarian law. As with the recovery of "DPA" bodies in 1986, TFDP participated in fact-finding missions and the exhumation of shallow graves, and helped to rehabilitate CPP torture victims, deeply affecting many staff.[120] Although theoretically committed to international humanitarian law since 1987, TFDP now documented and condemned NPA atrocities with greater determination,[121] echoing policy within the NDF itself.[122]

As the principal NGO in the national democratic camp, TFDP comes under significant pressure to maintain its militancy. In 1988, for instance, human rights NGOs and POs in Cagayan Valley (notably the local branch of the Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace (EMJP)) attacked TFDP and differences were only resolved at a specially-convened "Unity

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[117] Minutes of National Board meeting, 20-22 May 1986.

[118] Minutes of TFDP Consortium meeting, The Hague, 7 December 1988.

[119] Minutes of National Board meeting, 26-28 October 1988.

[120] Victims, according to Sr. Lucero, included NGO workers and some of her own former students from St. Joseph's College, Manila (Lucero interview, 13 August 1993).

[121] Notably, an encounter with NPA guerillas in Surigao del Sur on 15 February 1992 in which 38 government soldiers died. "[W]ounded soldiers", said TFDP, quoting survivors, were "systematically executed", "focus[ing] attention anew on whether the NDF itself was faithfully adhering to internationally accepted norms" (**Pumipiglas 3...**, pg. 64).

[122] On the NDF's acknowledgement of abuses by the NPA and CPP, see interview with Satur Ocampo in **Pumipiglas 3...**, pp. 162-164.

Congress".[123] By 1993, the CPP's "Reaffirm" V "Reject" debate had exacerbated the pressure but TFDP's size and influence gave it a significant capacity to survive as it evolved from an organisation narrowly concerned with defending NDF/CPP activists and NPA guerrillas to a human rights organisation with a less partisan mandate. According to Satur Ocampo, a staunch defender of TFDP interests in underground circles,

> With the development of broader concepts of human rights, [TFDP] is expanding its activities and concerns beyond political detainees or those in the revolutionary movement. It [will] be a test for the NDF to withstand the intrusion of the political effects of the on-going debate within the movement such as the pressures on some TFDP units against extending services to groups or peoples identified with other parties and TFDP must maintain its independent role. As far as defending human rights and extending support to the needy is concerned, it should not be affected by political positions.[124]

Ocampo's position suggests that TFDP, ironically, is dependent on support from influential NDF members to maintain its integrity as a human rights organisation.

As human rights violations committed against individuals fell in the 1990s (See Table 10), TFDP's 10th National Convention in 1993 approved a new mission statement that eroded its commitment to social transformation.[125] TFDP agreed to focus increasingly on economic, political, and cultural rights, embracing special interests including women, indigenous groups, and children.[126] The decision formalised initiatives already underway,

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[123] Dimaranan interview, 19 November 1993. According to the minutes of the National Board meeting of 25-28 July 1988, POs expected TFDP to function as a cause-oriented group such as BAYAN, a problem also experienced in Visayas, though preempted there.

[124] Satur Ocampo, interview, 19 November 1993.

[125] "As a service organisation", the new mission statement read, "TFDP shall work to protect the rights and promote the legitimate interests of political prisoners and other victims of human rights violations, and create and enhance among people awareness of their rights and knowledge of basic human rights concepts and principles" ("Proceedings...10th National Convention", Appendix F).

[126] Ibid; Lucero interview 13 August 1993. On the growing nexus between development and human rights espoused by national democratic NGOs, see **Human Rights Forum**, Vol. 3 No. 1, 1993.

including collaboration with environmental NGOs on ecology issues,[127] and heralded further conflict with the CPP.

5. Coalition-Building.

Coalition-building (or alliance work, the term preferred by TFDP) is one of the most important mechanisms by which TFDP intervenes in politics. TFDP is a member of the Multi-Sectoral Peace Advocates (MSPA), the National Peace Conference, and the National Coordinating Council on Local Government (NCC-LG) and a number of regional coalitions. Unlike PRRM however, TFDP concentrates on one, the Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA, from the Tagalog, *para* (stop)), a coalition of predominantly national democratic human rights NGOs.

The collapse of the Marcos regime created a dramatic new "democratic space" for human rights NGOs and POs: freedom to organise, liaise openly with other organisations at the local or national level, and actively mobilize new constituencies. In May 1986, human rights NGOs and POs, mostly national democrat-aligned and led by TFDP, held a national congress in Manila. To consolidate the human rights movement, a new coalition, PAHRA, was launched, and Sr. Mariani Dimaranan became PAHRA's first Chairperson.[128] With 100 NGO/PO members by 1993,[129] PAHRA became the most important human rights coalition

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[127] In 1991, for instance, TFDP and HARIBON workers were arrested in Palawan during a petition campaign ("TFDP Mid-Year Report January-June 1991"; Lucero interview, 18 October 1993). On the growing human rights-ecology nexus, see Max de Mesa, "A Philippine Endeavour: Building the People's Aegis Against the Twin Assaults on Human Rights and the Environment", **Human Rights Forum**, Vol. 2 No. 2, 1992.

[128] **Pumipiglas 3...**, pg. 75.

[129] For a full list of PAHRA members, see Gerard Clarke, "Human Rights Non-Governmental Organisations in the Philippines: A Case-study of Task Force Detainees of the Philippines", in Sidney G. Silliman and Lela Garner Noble (Eds.), **Non-Governmental Organisations in the Philippines: Civil Society and the State**, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, forthcoming.

in the Philippines and an important weapon used by the left to berate the Aquino government, co-ordinating issue-specific campaigns,[130] organising pickets and demonstrations,[131] petitioning United Nations organs,[132] and, from 1989, lobbying the Senate and House.[133] In addition however, PAHRA became a significant critic of the CPP and the NPA and highlighted growing tension within the human rights movement as the CPP, and supportive NGOs/POs, split between those committed and opposed to the CPP's orthodox Marxist-Leninist- Mao Tse Tung Thought philosophy.

In contrast to coalitions such as CPAR and FDC which achieved quick success, but then fragmented, PAHRA experienced a difficult birth. Between 1987 and 1989, when fighting between the AFP and NPA was at its most intense, moderates shunned PAHRA, and its national democrat orientation, combined with Aquino's ostensible liberalism, made organising difficult.[134] Internally, PAHRA was destabilised by the CPP's "Operation Missing Link". PAHRA staff member Pearl Abaya was abducted outside TFDP's National Centre in November 1988 by the CPP. Amid intensive inquiries in underground circles by PAHRA officials, Abaya was released after six months.[135] By then however, relations

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[130] For instance, the 1986 "Exodus" and "Piso Para sa mga Bata ng Cagayan" (a Peso for the Children of Cagayan) campaigns directed against government counter-insurgency operations in Cagayan.

[131] In 1988, for instance, PAHRA organised a "trial" of Manila Police Chief Brig. Gen. Alfredo Lim and Lt. Col. Romeo Maganto, commander of Manila's Western Police District Station No. 1 (Tondo) on charges of multiple murder. The 5-person jury composed of Rep. Nikki Coseteng, a Quezon City councillor and representatives of PAHRA, MAG and EMJP found both guilty in a ringing condemnation of the Commission on Human Rights' failure to act on cases filed by human rights NGOs (See **The Manila Chronicle**, 25 June 1988).

[132] For instance, in February 1988, PAHRA petitioned the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to conduct an inquiry into the human rights situation in the Philippines (**Malaya**, 20 February 1988).

[133] See further below.

[134] **Pumipiglas 3...**, pp. 78.

[135] According to anonymous sources, Abaya's release followed direct representations by PAHRA to exiled CPP leader Jose Maria Sison in December 1988.

between PAHRA and the revolutionary movement were tense, exacerbated as others released directed TFDP and the military to shallow graves in Southern Tagalog.[136] From 1990 however, as the Aquino government increasingly acknowledged the legitimacy of PAHRA and TFDP grievances, its steadfastness won it increased credibility with Congress, the judiciary and the media.[137] By 1993, co-ordination among members through PAHRA committees (including campaigns and research & documentation) had improved significantly,[138] and campaign launches regularly attracted ambassadors and embassy officials, bishops, political representatives, and the national media.[139]

One of the distinctive features of PAHRA was its vocal support for the national democratic cause. According to Lucero, its national democrat identity and its role as a "political centre" in projecting human rights as a central issue filled a political vacuum and hence proved a significant source of strength. During the early 1990s, it's effectiveness stemmed largely from the specialist skills of individual members and a resultant division of labour. TFDP was responsible for documentation, EMJP for militarization and internal refugees, MAG for medical support to fact-finding missions and to former political detainees, and KAPATID, SELDA, FIND and MARTYR for organising specific constituencies. This division, Dimaranan argued, made TFDP work focused and systematic, and less vulnerable

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[136] Anonymous interviews. PAHRA called for a presidential inquiry after 30 bodies were discovered in 13 shallow graves in Laguna and Quezon (of an estimated 270 missing, according to relatives) in May 1989 (See **The Manila Chronicle**, 17 May 1989). The purges in Southern Tagalog were reputedly masterminded by NPA commanders Gregorio Rosal and Leopoldo Mabilangan (See **The Manila Chronicle**, 27 May 1989).

[137] Former Supreme Court Justice Abraham F. Sarmiento became PAHRA Co-Chairman in 1991.

[138] Lucero interview, 18 October 1993.

[139] The launch of PAHRA's anti-vigilante campaign, "CAFGUs Against Human Rights", on 2 April 1993 for instance was attended by the Belgian ambassador, British and Australian embassy officials, 1 bishop, and representatives of 3 Congressmen. The launch was also promoted through a front page article, "CAFGUs persist in abuses", in the **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 2 April 1993.

to repression by the government or censure by the Catholic hierarchy or foreign funders, in contrast to the *Vicaria de la Solidaridad* in Chile, which closed after losing church support.[140]

Outside Manila, PAHRA was less effective. PAHRA regional and provincial affiliates in which TFDP was prominent, such as the Human Rights Alliance of Negros (HRAN), the Davao Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (DAHRA) and the Cotabato Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (CAHRA), were only sustained for short periods.[141] Federations such as EMJP, SELDA, MARTYR, and KAPATID lacked the extensive national networks to provide TFDP with local coalition partners, while others, notably EMJP, faced funding difficulties in the 1990s as the number of individual human rights violations fell (see Table 10). Where they did have chapters, however, partner POs resented TFDP prominence and salary differentials between TFDP and other human rights workers.[142] Similarly, TFDP and partner POs mounted effective short-term coalitions in response to specific issues, for instance, on behalf of internal refugees following the displacement of 35,000 people in Negros Occidental in April 1989,[143] yet found it difficult to launch pro-active and sustained

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[140] Dimaranan, interview, 21 July 1993. The *Vicaria* documented human rights abuses, provided lawyers, and managed socio-economic projects. Its closure dealt a significant blow to the human rights movement in Chile, a lesson, Dimaranan argues, that TFDP is determined to avoid.

[141] HRAN for instance was established by TFDP and the Bacolod Social Action Secretariat (SAC) in 1988 but lost momentum in 1990 when SAC staff were retrenched following the appointment of a conservative Bishop (Jagurin interview; Torre Campo interview). Both DAHRA and CAHRA collapsed in 1987-88 although a Southern Mindanao Alliance of Human Rights Advocates was launched in August 1993 (Caspe interview).

[142] TFDP salaries outside Manila though moderate compared to PRRM or PBSP are still twice the level of KAPATID's (anonymous interview). The problem is a long-standing one. Minutes of TFDP's National Board meeting of 26-29 August 1979 record complaints from partner human rights POs about TFDP staff wearing stylish clothes and eating in restaurants.

[143] **Pumipiglas 3...**, pg. 33. As well as publicizing the issue nationally, HRAN's campaign led to the establishment of the Federation of Internal Refugees (FIRE) and the *Koalisyon para sa Paghidaet* (Coalition for Peace), in Negros, an island where alliance work has been traditionally hazardous (Torre-Campo interview).

coalitions.

With the onset of the CPP "Reaffirm" V "Reject" debate (see chapter 4), TFDP coalition-building became more difficult. As of 1993, TFDP's centralised structure ensured sufficient autonomy from the NDF and CPP to preserve its institutional integrity, unlike sectoral organisations such as *Kilusang May Uno* (KMU, May First Movement) or *Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas* (KMP, Philippine Peasants Movements) which split into rival camps.[144] As federations, however, in which regional affiliates had greater autonomy, coalition partners such as KAPATID and EMJP were more vulnerable, threatening PAHRA, and by implication, TFDP. Equally, pressure from the local branches of organisations such as KAPATID or EMJP threatened to engulf TFDP units and regional offices. In late 1993, TFDP workers reported sensitivity about cases they took on, pressure on individuals to take sides, and the need for frequent unit and regional office meetings to contain the pressure.[145]

In 1994 however, the CPP internal split finally engulfed PAHRA. Following five months of debate on PAHRA's draft Philippine Declaration of Human and Peoples Rights, 28 member organisations led by BAYAN (*Bagong Alayansang Makabayan*, New Patriotic Alliance) walked out from PAHRA's fifth national Congress on 26 October. BAYAN denounced attempts "to transform PAHRA into a politically neutral organisation which reeks of collaboration and compromise with the state on the issue of human rights violations" while other organisations condemned the PAHRA draft as "too universal to guide human rights advocacy in the [Philippines]". KMU, KMP, GABRIELA (the General Assembly Binding Women for Reform, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action) and SELDA joined BAYAN in leaving PAHRA, while TFDP, MAG, EMJP and the Association of Concerned Teachers

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[144] In August 1993, according to Lucero, TFDP's Management Committee decided to "assert [TFDP's] integrity as a legal organisation" (Lucero interview, 18 October 1993).

[145] Anonymous interviews.

(ACT) remained.[146] As the human rights situation improved, the partisan character of human rights NGO action had weakened, leading to further divergence between human rights NGOs and the national democratic movement and further fragmentation of the national human rights movement.

6. Volunteer Mobilization.

Volunteer-mobilization and membership have long been sensitive within TFDP, and amid international appeals for greater NGO accountability,[147] illustrate dilemmas Philippine NGOs face in developing membership bases. When TFDP membership was introduced in the early 1980s, it was confined to staff, roughly 250, to protect both TFDP's national democratic orientation and the national centre's authority. In 1985 however a NOVIB report criticized the narrow membership base and recommended that TFDP develop a local membership structure involving other local human rights organisations, thus replacing units and their paid staff.[148] Article IV of TFDP's constitution approved by the 1986 National Assembly (28 January- 1 February), noted that "TFDP shall have for its membership individuals who share the same vision and adhere to its principles" but concrete plans to expand membership beyond staff were avoided in accompanying Bye-laws. NOVIB again criticized TFDP's narrow membership base in 1987,[149] but Dimaranan opposed expansion.[150]

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[146] BAYAN Press Statement, 26 October 1994; **The Manila Chronicle**, 28 October 1994; **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 28 October 1994.

[147] See for instance Michael Edwards and David Hulme, "NGOs and Development: Performance and Accountability in 'the New World Order'", paper to the International Workshop on "NGOs and Development: Performance and Accountability in the New World Order", University of Manchester, 27-29 June 1994.

[148] Thoolen, "Report Mission...[TFDP]", pp. 4 and 8.

[149] Francisco and Zalaquett, "Evaluation of [TFDP]", pp. 46-47.

[150] Anonymous interview.

With the appointment of a TFDP Advisory Board in 1987, TFDP came under greater pressure and at the April 1990 National Convention, cautious membership provisions were added to TFDP's bye-laws. Membership was confined to "consistent human rights advocate[s]", the National Assembly was empowered to limit numbers, and the Membership Committee to ensure representative nationwide distribution, while individual membership applications had to be approved by the National Board.[151] In July 1991, a TFDP membership manual was produced, but despite the appointment of outside specialists and constituency representatives such as Prof. Randy David, Atty. Rene Sarmiento and Nelia Sancho to TFDP's new Board of Trustees in 1990, opposition to expanded membership from Dimaranan and others within TFDP delayed implementation.

By early 1992 however, Lucero was in effective command and TFDP made concrete plans to recruit outside members. To maintain stability, to prevent TFDP becoming a mass organisation (ie. a PO), and to provide support to units, TFDP's National Management Committee (NAMANCOM) proposed that non-staff membership should not exceed the number of staff (by now, roughly 300).[152] Despite reservations,[153] the Board of Trustees approved the NAMANCOM plans and set a recruitment target of 100 non-staff members by June 1993.[154] Although some regions opposed non-staff members,[155] the target was exceeded and by June 1993, TFDP had 239, "most of whom" were "long-time human rights advocates and TFDP allies", giving a total membership of 479 including staff.[156]

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[151] TFDP Bye-laws, Article 1, Sections 1-3.

[152] Minutes of TFDP Board of Trustees meeting, 2 March 1990.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting, 6 June 1992.

[155] Some felt units could maintain effective relationships with important sectors, notably lawyers and religious, without formal membership (See "[TFDP] Advisory Team Interim Report", pg. 22).

[156] Lucero, in "Proceedings...10th National Convention", Appendix E, pg. 7.

TFDP's July 1991 membership manual establishes an elaborate and stringent recruitment procedure. Applications must be accompanied by a letter of recommendation; they must be vetted by local staff, the regional director and National Membership Committee; and must be approved by a Board of Trustees majority vote.[157] Members can be expelled if they "issue derogatory statements" or "participate in smear campaign[s]", protecting TFDP from internecine intra-left debate, and must "participate in TFDP activities", excluding passive supporters.[158] Non-staff members are drawn primarily from the "middle sectors" (see Table 9) and have brought TFDP enhanced credibility with government officials and local communities, and helped secure TFDP accreditation with local government bodies.[159]

Table 9
TFDP Non-Staff Membership, June 1993: Occupational Profile (%)[160]

Lawyers	18	Government officials	3	Accountants	1
Priests	21	Social workers	2	Midwives	1
Nuns	5	Government employees	3	Engineers	1
Pastors	8	Private employees	2	Farmers	3
Bishops	2	Church lay workers	4	Nurses	1
Electricians	1	Journalists	1	Teachers	9
Businessmen	3	NGO workers	9	Doctors	2

By June 1993, all regions had recruited members. At the unit level however, some staff oppose national policy of limiting non-staff members. While some units have recruited no members, others have exceeded their quota.[161] Units recruit an average three to four members, providing little income from membership dues yet maximising TFDP's local

[157] "[TFDP] Membership Manual", pp. 23.

[158] Ibid, pg. 22-23.

[159] Lucero interview, 18 October 1993; Lucero in "Proceedings...10th Convention", Appendix E, pg. 7; "End of Year Report July-December 1992", pg. 23.

[160] Based on figures in Lucero, "Proceedings...", ibid.

[161] Anonymous interviews.

influence through careful selection. TFDP's Bacolod unit, for instance, had three members in November 1993, a bishop and 2 priests, but was anxious to recruit an academic to promote human rights education initiatives in schools and colleges.[162] In Davao City, TFDP members sit on the *Sangguniang Panglungsod* (City Council) while another is former Governor of Davao del Sur.[163] Restricted membership has proved largely successful. Members are generally both active and influential in their local communities, yet as long-standing allies, provide stability at a time of significant pressure on, and institutional change in, TFDP. Equally, given TFDP's commitment to sustaining other human rights POs, restricted membership prevents TFDP from poaching potential members from mass organisations, such as KAPATID, SELDA or FIND.

7. Electoral Participation.

Since 1986, TFDP has become increasingly active in electoral campaigns, primarily by monitoring human rights violations. TFDP reorganised the Luzon-based human rights coalition *Tanggol-Karapatan Para Sa Kalayaan* (Human Rights For Freedom) to monitor violence during the 1987 Congressional elections.[164] At a time when TFDP was under pressure to refine its political mandate however, staff were warned about partisan behaviour during the campaign, and one worker resigned to run as a candidate.[165] In 1988, some TFDP workers resigned their posts to contest the January local elections under new policy that allowed them to resume their positions if defeated. Two TFDP workers died however; Roberto Rivares, 22, murdered on 12 February 1992 after running unsuccessfully in Aurora

[162] Torre-Campo interview.
[163] Caspe interview.
[164] "TFDP-Luzon Progress Report, January-June 1987"
[165] "TFDP's response to the Francisco-Zalaquett Evaluation"; Caspe interview.

under the *Partido ng Bayan* slate,[166] and Robinson Manaya, 47, shot on 5 May after his election to Butuan City Council.[167] Lawyers closely identified with TFDP also contested the elections, but amid the atmosphere of intense intimidation of candidates associated with cause-oriented groups, achieved success in Negros only.[168]

As with other NGOs, 1992 was the first year in which TFDP systematically intervened in an election campaign. PAHRA drafted a Human Rights Agenda and sought support from electoral candidates, an initial attempt to establish a "human rights vote". TFDP also organised regional meetings to question candidates on human rights concerns, chaired by Board of Trustees member and television chat show host Prof. Randy David, while TFDP appeared in television and radio programmes on the election campaign.[169] According to Lucero, TFDP sought to educate voters on human rights issues, rather than influence votes, a campaign to which the AMRSP lent important support.[170] According to TFDP, 72 separate election-related events were organised by units and regional offices.[171] Few regions tabulated specific results, but the Cagayan Valley regional office claimed that 10 of 28 candidates who adopted the Human Rights Agenda were elected to local positions.[172] As in 1988, staff were allowed to resign to run, although the Board of Trustees vetoed a

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[166] Secretary-General of *BAYAN*'s Aurora chapter before joining TFDP, Rivares' death was attributed to participation in the election campaign (See **The Manila Chronicle**, 13 February 1988).

[167] Manaya was reputedly killed by members of an anti-communist vigilante gang, BACODA (Bayanihan Council of Datus) (**Malaya**, 20 May 1988).

[168] Minutes of National Board meeting, 26-28 January 1988.

[169] TFDP officials twice appeared on Channel 7's weekly "Probe Team" ("Mid Year Report, January-June 1992", pg. 8).

[170] Lucero interview, 18 October 1993. Issues promoted included the release of political prisoners, indemnification of victims, disbandment of para-military groups, and abandonment of the government's "total war" policy ("Mid-Year Report...", ibid, pg. 7).

[171] Ibid, pg. 6.

[172] Ibid, pg. 7.

NAMANCOM proposal that resignations should be permanent to protect TFDP's credibility.[173] Four staff resigned to run, including the Northern Mindanao regional director, but all were defeated and rejoined TFDP.[174]

Despite TFDP's national policy of non-partisanship, many regions and units determined their own positions. In Negros, TFDP refrained from joining the Negros Movement for People's Candidates initiated by the *Hujpong* (United) Nationalist Alliance, the local *BAYAN* chapter and confined its activities to voter education.[175] In North Cotabato however, TFDP openly supported Rep. Gregorio Andolana's successful reelection campaign by preparing and distributing campaign material, and promoted an NGO/PO "Peoples Agenda", as well as monitoring an election count centre.[176] Though ultimately such partisanship did little to undermine TFDP credibility (all NGOs and POs in Kidapawan participated openly to some extent), it underlined the traditional independence and radicalism of TFDP's Mindanao staff.

8. Participation in Local Government Structures.

In contrast to PRRM, TFDP radically eschewed participation in local government structures until the early 1990s. Antipathy to TFDP among local politicians, military officers and government officials was intense, and where TFDP did receive invitations, it feared co-

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[173] Minutes of Board of Trustees meeting, 2 March 1992.

[174] Lucero interview, 15 November 1993.

[175] Torre-Campo interview.

[176] Herminia Palua-Gumanao and Rebecca Mayola-Dano, TFDP-Kidapawan, interview, 4 November 1993; Joel Virador, Unit Supervisor, TFDP-Kidapawan, interview, 5 November 1993. The Southern Mindanao Regional Director supported the staff's actions, though warned them "not to be too visible" (Caspe interview).

optation.[177] By 1992 however, TFDP credibility at the local level had increased significantly, and the 1991 Local Government Code (LGC) made substantial provisions for wide-scale NGO participation in local government structures. In addition however, Congressional support existed for a specific human rights dimension to local government activities, providing TFDP with a potentially important role.[178]

In 1992, TFDP became involved in a wide range of local government structures, though policy by late 1993 remained cautious and sceptical. In June 1992, when many TFDP offices were already accredited by local government units, TFDP allowed staff to become members of *Sangguniang Panglunsod/Panlalawigan* (City/Provincial Councils).[179] Second, staff were allowed to join National Unification Commission (NUC) local secretariats, but not as convenors; "TFDP", the board decided, "should...maintain its critical stance vis-a-vis the whole peace process and maximise opportunities brought by the same".[180] Third, staff were allowed to join Peace and Order Councils (POCs) established by the Department of Interior and Local Government.[181] In some provinces however, (notably, Leyte), TFDP eschewed participation because of staff constraints or local intimidation.[182]

By the end of 1992, units in at least 4 of TFDP's 13 regions were participating in

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[177] In 1988 for instance, TFDP turned down an invitation from Quezon Province's *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* (Provincial Council) to join the Quezon Human Rights Council "to maintain its independence" (Minutes of National Board meeting, 26-28 October 1988).

[178] In 1990, the Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights, chaired by Wigberto Tanada recommended that Provincial and Municipal Boards and City Councils establish Human Rights Committees and liaise closely with human rights organisations (**Report of the Committee on Justice and Human Rights on the Human Rights Situation in the Philippines**, Senate, Committee Report No. 1025, 6 December 1990, pg. 72).

[179] Minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting of 6 June 1992.

[180] Ibid.

[181] Ibid.

[182] With roughly 2-3 staff per province, many units are too busy to attend regular local government meetings. In other provinces, Lucero notes, staff lack the confidence and competence to face landlords and military officers noted for human rights abuses in local government structures (Lucero interview, 18 October 1993).

LGC structures, NUC local secretariats or POCs, helping to increase TFDP credibility, staff reported, in those regions.[183] According to Lucero however, the bureaucracy of participation alienated staff (eg. notifications of meetings arriving after the meeting) and meaningful participation was only possible in the small number of areas (Samar, Davao City and the Cordilleras) where government officials are supportive towards, or local allies of, TFDP.[184] In Negros, TFDP units do not participate in POCs or LGC structures, because of the hostile environment towards national democratic NGOs, although the Bacolod unit has participated in NUC consultations.[185] In Southern Mindanao however, conditions are more favourable. In North Cotabato, TFDP sits on the Provincial Development Council and POC, as well as the Municipal POC for Kidapawan and the Tulunan Local Development Council. TFDP also maintains contact with the governor who frequently attends TFDP events.[186] In the Provincial POC, staff sit opposite two Philippine Army battalion commanders, and the Philippine National Police provincial commander. Implacable enemies of TFDP in the past, they accepted TFDP, staff claimed, as a legitimate organisation and POC member, an important success for TFDP.[187]

Davao City, the third largest in the Philippines with a population of over 2m, represents TFDP influence in local government at its greatest. TFDP sits on the City Development Council elected in March 1993, and its subcommittees on social development and education. Staff feel participation is worthwhile, especially in the education subcommittee

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[183] "End of Year Report...1992", pg. 26.

[184] Lucero interviews, 18 October and 15 November 1993.

[185] Torre-Campo interview.

[186] Virador interview; Palua-Gumanao and Mayola-Dano interview. Relations with Governor Diaz are frequently fractious however. In 1992, TFDP was elected by other NGOs to the provincial NUC peace secretariat, but TFDP was passed over by Diaz with whom power of appointment ultimately lay (Virador interview).

[187] Virador interview.

where TFDP promotes human rights educational initiatives, but participation is time-consuming and feasible only because staff from the Davao unit and regional office can alternate.[188] Support within the City Council and contacts in Davao City's bureaucracy have been critical in building TFDP influence. The Chairperson of GABRIELLA-Mindanao and Secretary-General of KMU-Mindanao were both elected to the City Council as candidates of *Lakas ng Davao* and the party, which holds the office of mayor, supports NGO participation in Council affairs. In addition, many city employees are ex-political detainees, while TFDP is close to the Provincial Fiscal (a former human rights lawyer), the City Chief of Tourism (a former TFDP worker), the Mayor's Chief of Staff (an active member of SELDA) and other senior officials. All represent important contacts to whom TFDP can appeal for help.[189]

9. Relations With Government.

TFDP's reticence about participation in local government structures was largely determined by bitter-sweet experiences during the Aquino years. Within weeks of the collapse of the Marcos dictatorship on 25 February 1986, TFDP Chairperson Sr. Mariani Dimaranan was appointed to three government bodies: the Judicial Reorganisation Committee (JRC); the Presidential Committee on Political Detainees (PCPD); and the Presidential Committee on Human Rights (PCHR).[190] With Justice Secretary and former human rights lawyer Silvestre Bello chairing the JRC, TFDP actively participated, recommending trusted human rights

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[188] Caspe interview; Dawal and Belarca interview.

[189] Caspe interview.

[190] Dimaranan nominated lawyer Johannes Ignacio to represent her on the JRC and the PCPD.

lawyers to judicial positions through regional JRCs in which Sub-Regional Office coordinators represented TFDP. "It [can] be safely stated", TFDP concluded in April 1987 after the JRC was disbanded, "that some of TFDP's [recommendees] to the Regional Trial Courts were appointed. The [National Centre] got good feedback on this point".[191] TFDP participation in the PCPD was less effective. The PCPD's Special Committee for the Immediate Release of Political Detainees on which TFDP was represented, was slower than the PCHR at effecting the release of political detainees[192] and the final report of the full PCPD in February 1987 recommended full pardon for 58 detainees, significantly less than TFDP had hoped.[193]

The main structure however through which TFDP probed the government's commitment to human rights was the PCHR. Sr. Mariani Dimaranan became a full member while another TFDP senior staff member, Anelyn de Luna, became Head of Records reflecting TFDP's strength in documentation work. As head of the Special Projects Department (SPD), Dimaranan was responsible for PCHR field operations, including fact-finding missions and the establishment of regional PCHR offices. By December 1986, Dimaranan had organised six fact-finding missions and the opening of a PCHR regional office in Davao City, while 691 cases were filed with the PCHR, mostly by TFDP, FLAG, SELDA and FIND.[194] By then however, release of the PCHR's P50m budget was delayed, the SPD had only one staff member,[195] and Marcos loyalists were calling for Dimaranan's removal.[196] By February 1987, when Jose Diokno died of cancer, the PCHR was

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[191] Letter from Sr. Mariani Dimaranan to Wim Monasso, NOVIB, 6 April 1987.

[192] Minutes of the National Board meeting, 6 April 1986.

[193] Letter from Johannes Ignacio to Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, 4 February 1987.

[194] **Human Rights Newsletter**, PCHR, Vol. 1 No. 1, 1987; de Luna interview.

[195] **News Herald**, 17 April 1986; "Report of the Presidential Committee on Human Rights, January-April 1987", pg. 9.

[196] See **The Manila Times**, 27 June 1986.

emasculated by opposition from Defence Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Fidel Ramos.[197] Frustrated, Mariani led a KAPATID delegation to a meeting with Aquino, urging prosecution of military personnel, but Aquino was non-committal. "Cory didn't have the political will", Dimaranan concluded, "it was the military running the show and not [her].[198] On 17-18 February 1987, Dimaranan led a PCHR fact-finding mission to Lupao, Nueva Ecija, after 17 people were shot dead by the AFP on 10 February. Supported by the fact-finding mission members (PCHR lawyers, National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) officials and Medical Action Group doctors), Dimaranan concluded that the dead were innocent civilians,[199] increasing her disillusionment with the Aquino government.

On 5 May 1987, the PCHR was abolished, and replaced by a Commission on Human Rights (CHR), prescribed in the February 1987 Constitution. Aquino invited Dimaranan to join the new Commission but Dimaranan refused.[200] The CHR had no prosecutory powers[201] but in a significant break with international law its mandate permitted

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[197] Ponce-Enrile and Ramos opposed prosecution of military personnel accused of human rights abuses under the Marcos regimes and wanted the PCHR to investigate NPA abuses, a move opposed by Diokno.

[198] Dimaranan interview, 19 November 1993.

[199] Ibid; **Human Rights Newsletter**.

[200] Letter from President Corazon Aquino to Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, 1 July 1987; Letter from Dimaranan to Aquino, 9 July 1987. According to her letter, Dimaranan declined because of her "not pleasant experiences in the PCHR" and her commitment to NGO work (Executive Order 163 noted that CHR members "shall not hold any office nor participate in the active management or control of any business", precluding Dimaranan's continued stewardship of TFDP).

[201] According to one member, the 1986 Constitutional Commission's Committee on Social Justice and Human Rights feared undermining the prosecutory powers of the Department of Justice. Opposition from human rights lawyers to the CHR's broad mandate (see below) was also opposed by conservatives (Rene Sarmiento, interview, 6 August 1993).

investigations into NPA abuses.[202] Uncertain of how the CHR would interpret this mandate, and determined to maintain a bridge, TFDP approved de Luna's continued secondment.[203] Within months however, TFDP was embroiled in conflict with CHR Chairperson Mary Concepsion Bautista. Frustrated by the government's refusal to act on cases filed with the PCHR, TFDP ignored CHR appeals for help with documentation. In response, Bautista accused TFDP and other human rights NGOs of conducting "a ruthless propaganda campaign" and of "violat[ing] the rights of millions" by refusing to coordinate with the CHR.[204]

Throughout 1988, tension between TFDP and the CHR deepened, exacerbated by international reports which criticized the government's human rights performance.[205] As government moderates called on TFDP to back down,[206] newspaper columnist Belinda Olivares Cunnan warned TFDP that its "undisguised bias for ...leftists", would inevitably "isolate [it] from popular support".[207] In reality however, the worsening human rights situation (see Chapter 3), Bautista's antipathy to human rights NGOs, and it's own steadfastness, won TFDP significant national and international support.[208] To quell animosity between the

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[202] Article 13, Section 18 of the 1987 constitution mandated the CHR to "Investigate, on its own or on complaint by any party, all forms of human rights violations involving civil and political rights". The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights binds states however and not non-state actors.

[203] Anelyn de Luna, Programme Director, Global Advocacy and Networking, TFDP, interview, Manila, 28 October 1993.

[204] **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 17 December 1987.

[205] Amnesty International, **The Philippines: Unlawful Killings...**; Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, **Vigilantes in the Philippines: A Threat to Democratic Rule**, New York, 1988; Asian Human Rights Commission, **Report of the Asian Human Rights Commission Study Mission to the Philippines, January 1988**, Hong Kong, 1988.

[206] See **The Manila Chronicle**, 5 July 1988, re. appeal by CHR Commissioner Paulynn Sicam to human rights NGOs to rethink their strategy and **Malaya**, 5 August 1988, re. appeal from Justice Secretary Sedfrey Ordonez to PAHRA to investigate rebel abuses.

[207] **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 8 July 1988.

[208] National support came especially from the media. See for instance the editorial in **The Manila Chronicle** of 4 January 1988 which cites TFDP statistics in a condemnation of the CHR and the government's human rights performance. Testifying to TFDP international

CHR and the human rights NGO community, Aquino met with FIND representatives in December 1988 and announced the establishment of a new Presidential Human Rights Committee (PHRC).[209]

According to Aquino, the PHRC was established after "non-governmental organisations, many of them critical of my governments efforts in human rights protection and promotion...helped government appreciate the gravity of our human rights situation".[210] Headed by the Justice Secretary, and under the control of the Office of the President, the PHRC included representatives from the CHR, and the Senate and House human rights committees. Two seats were allocated to PAHRA and FLAG as representatives of the human rights NGO community, with the PAHRA seat filled by TFDP legal counsel Rene Sarmiento. NGOs were perplexed and taken by surprise by the PHRC's establishment[211] but within a year established an effective rapport. FIND lobbied Aquino for action on behalf of the disappeared in their December 1988 meeting. In response, the PCHR "facilitated searches in camps and military stockades and [brought] cases of...disappearances to authorities through members of the committee".[212] In 1991, when 3 TFDP workers in Bicol were accused of

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credibility, Australian Trade and Foreign Minister Gareth Evans met with TFDP officials during a visit to Manila in January 1989 (See **The Manila Chronicle**, 27 January 1989).

[209] **The Manila Chronicle**, 10 December 1988; Administrative Order No. 101, 13 December 1988; **Malaya**, 14 December 1988. Aquino's announcement followed a July meeting with Cardinal Ricardo Vidal and AMRSP officials where the creation of "composite investigation panel" to assist the CHR was discussed (**Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 8 July 1988), and a report from the Presidential Task Force on the Improvement of the Administration of Justice which noted human rights NGO antipathy to the CHR (**Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 6 December 1988).

[210] Corazon Aquino, "Transparency and Democracy", speech to the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 16 June 1993, reproduced in **The Manila Bulletin**, 19 June 1993.

[211] "I have no idea why it was created. It suddenly appeared...[T]here was no need for the PHRC. What the government should have done [was] support the CHR, increase the budget and expunge [it's] weaknesses", Sarmiento noted (Sarmiento interview).

[212] "[TFDP] Semi-Annual Report, July-December 1989", pg. 8.

being members of a communist front organisation in charges filed by the AFP, the PHRC passed a resolution declaring TFDP "a legal and legitimate human rights organisation".[213] In 1992, among other measures, PHRC investigated military counter-insurgency operations in Northern Luzon, and in response to TFDP demands, facilitated the release of political detainees on humanitarian grounds, reviewed the cases of detainees charged with criminal offenses, approved the clustering of political detainees at Manila's Muntinlupa state penitentiary and established a P20m witness protection programme.[214] By facilitating direct relationships between human rights NGOs and officials from the AFP, DOJ and NBI, the PHRC avoided the bureaucracy and inertia of the CHR, leading to speedy investigations, direct hearings with human rights victims, and more vigorous prosecutions.[215]

Since May 1992, when Fidel Ramos became President, the PHRC has been largely inactive. Constructive, albeit still tentative, relations with human rights NGOs have been maintained however. In October 1992, the CHR, TFDP, FLAG, PAHRA and FIND established a Fact-Finding Committee on Involuntary Missing Persons under DOJ auspices to trace 1,128 people who disappeared during the Marcos and Aquino regimes[216] and on 3 December 1992, during a meeting with TFDP and FIND, Ramos announced a P4m compensation fund.[217] TFDP representatives were unhappy with the meeting,[218] but in a

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[213] Minutes of Board of Trustees meeting, 2 July 1991.

[214] **Pumipiglas 3...**, pp. 90-91 and 131; "[TFDP] Mid-Year Report, January-June 1992", pg. 7.

[215] **Pumipiglas 3...**, pg. 131.

[216] **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 17 October 1992. FIND later claimed that 821 activists disappeared during the Aquino regime, compared to its original estimate of 367, and 752 under Marcos (**Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 5 December 1991). The Fact-Finding Committee was formally established by Memorandum Order No. 88, 8 February 1993.

[217] Amid NGO concern at CHR control, a Memorandum of Agreement dated 14 May 1993 allocated a share of the fund to FIND (Antonio Villasor, PAHRA, interview, 18 May 1993). By October 1993, compensation of P10,000 each had been paid to the relatives of 14 of the disappeared and P100,00 allocated to a relatives' co-operative fund (Lucero interview, 18 October 1993).

speech on 10 December, Ramos acknowledged the legitimacy of human rights NGOs:

> Tension...between the government and...human rights [NGOs] is a necessary element in the democracy we are trying to build. We in government must learn to realise that they are not the enemy...I [want] to see both government and NGOs...work closely together...[with] more openness between us [and] more empathy with one another's situation.[219]

Tension and co-operation remain defining characteristics of TFDP-government relationships. By late 1993, TFDP continued to negotiate the release of political detainees with the Department of Justice Task Force on Human Rights, worked with the Department of Social Welfare and Development to aid child victims of internal conflict and implemented an elaborate human rights education programme in association with the Department of Education, Culture and Sport. In contrast to PRRM, relationships between TFDP and state agencies are underpinned by institutional rather than personalist ties and have led to "more respect and deference to TFDP workers".[220] Significant tension remained however, highlighted by the death of TFDP worker Chris Batan in February 1993.[221]

In 1993, political prisoners became a central political issue amid attempts by the Ramos government to initiate peace talks with the CPP-NDF-NPA. In June, TFDP attacked Ramos for continued arrests, the slow release of political prisoners and use of criminal

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[218] Sarmiento interview; Lucero interview, 13 August 1993; Both felt the meeting, covered by the media at Malacanang's request, was manipulated by Ramos to portray NGO support for his administration.

[219] "Ramos Delivers Speech Marking Human Rights Day", Foreign Broadcast Information Service (East Asia), Washington, 10 December 1991, pg. 1.

[220] Lucero interview, 18 October 1993.

[221] Batan, 26, was shot dead by CAFGU personnel in Mountain Province on 23 February. Although active in other organisations, his TFDP work was, according to Amnesty International, "the immediate motive for the killing" (Amnesty International, Urgent Action, UA 49/93, 26 February 1993), leading to further acrimony about the continued existence of CAFGUs (See **CAFGUs Against Human Rights**, Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates, Quezon City, 1993.)

charges against political detainees.[222] Ramos asked the CHR to clarify TFDP's claims[223] but on 20 June his Press Secretary cited CHR assertion's that "there have been no new cases of political detention since July 1992 or the assumption into office of Mr. Ramos".[224] Detainees cited by TFDP, the statement continued, were guilty of common crimes and could apply for early release under the amnesty guidelines of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Political Prisoners. Days later, the CHR repudiated the Malacanang statement and confirmed the TFDP statistics as correct.[225] On 29 June, Defence Undersecretary Fernando Campos entered the fray, refuting TFDP's allegations.[226] Challenged by Justice Secretary Franklin Drilon to support its claims, TFDP held a press conference in Muntinlupa state penitentiary, naming 151 convicted political prisoners and presenting details of 356 political detainees held in 77 detention centres nation-wide.[227] In the final shot of the immediate furore, TFDP

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[222] **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 14 June 1993. TFDP claimed that 10 political detainees in Manila alone had been arrested since Ramos became president, one of whom died in detention, and that 377 political prisoners remained in detention. Of 222 releases since July 1992, TFDP continued, only 72 resulted from executive action, undermining the peace process. TFDP also denounced as "propaganda" the repeal of the anti-subversion law, Republic Act 1700, legalising the CPP, since political prisoners were now charged under criminal legislation. A few days later, TFDP claimed 131 political detainees in total had been arrested after June 1992 (and another 506 released) (**Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 23 June 1993).

[223] **The Manila Bulletin**, 16 June 1993.

[224] **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, 21 June 1993.

[225] Letter to the Editor from CHR Commissioner Paulynn Sicam, in **The Manila Chronicle**, 22 June 1993. Sicam noted however that the exact status of the detainees had yet to be resolved. CHR Chairman Sedfrey Ordonez however refuted Sicam's statement and TFDP's claims after returning from overseas and said no political detainees currently held had been arrested since July 1992. Also refuting TFDP's claims, the NBI Assistant Director claimed there were no political prisoners at all in detention (**The Manila Bulletin**, 3 July 1993).

[226] Letter to the Editor, **The Manila Chronicle**, 29 June 1993. Campos's letter followed columnist Ricardo Malay's assertion in **The Manila Chronicle**, 16 June 1993 that "All the president's confidence building moves will amount to nought if the charges of TFDP are proven true".

[227] TFDP press conference kit, 2 July 1993; **The Manila Chronicle**, 3 July 1993. TFDP's assertions were supported by PAHRA and FLAG.

claimed the last word in unprecedented dispute with the President, his Press Secretary, CHR, NBI, and the Departments of Justice and National Defence.[228] The exchange testified to TFDP's ability, unrivalled among Philippine NGOs, to confront the government broadside and emerge with its credibility enhanced.

10. Networking.

TFDP credibility with government, despite enormous hostility from sections of the media, military, Congress, and the Christian Churches, depends in part on a network of contacts within each. Media liaison, through regular press conferences, press statements, and media events, represented a breakthrough in 1992 and 1993, and by June 1993, TFDP had over 500 media contacts nationwide.[229] Local-level media liaison is also highly successful. In Negros, TFDP and KAPATID ties to the COBRA-ANS agency facilitate coverage of human rights concerns in Bacolod newspapers[230] while TFDP campaigns in Davao are regularly featured in the city's biggest selling daily, the *Mindanao Daily Mirror*.[231] In North Cotabato, the Kidapawan unit supervisor helps run a weekly public affairs programme, *Radio Forum,* on the church-run radio station DXND (Notre Dame) while the provincial newspaper, *Mindanao Express,* carries all the unit's press releases.[232]

Within the Catholic Church, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines is

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[228] In "updated figures" released some weeks later, Justice Secretary Drilon claimed Ramos had approved the release of 149 detainees since July 1992, in addition to 248 released on repeal of RA1700. Drilon however did not refute TFDP's claims of 356 political prisoners still in detention (Letter to the Editor, **The Manila Chronicle**, 27 July 1993).

[229] Lucero, "...Strategic Assessment (1990-93)", pg. 9.

[230] Jagurin interview.

[231] Caspe interview.

[232] Virador interview.

critical of TFDP's militancy[233] yet TFDP also commands support from a handful of Bishops, including Antonio Fortich, TFDP Co-Chairperson, and Antonio Nepomuceno (both retired but still influential), and Julio Labayen. Support from leading members of the AMRSP, maintained through regular liaison and lobbying, has also protected TFDP's working arm status, despite a 1987-1989 crisis in TFDP-AMRSP relations. Locally, many units remain housed on church property and leading congregations, such as the Columbans and Redemptorists, provide vital support, but church support varies widely. In North Cotabato, long-standing support from local Bishops (Bishop Escaler, his successor in 1984, Bishop Orlando Quevido, and from 1991, Bishop Juan De Dios Pueblos) facilitates cooperation with the diocesan Justice and Peace programme, the Social Action Centre and the Prisoners Apostolate.[234] In Southern Mindanao however, relations with the Church deteriorated after Davao's Bishop Alu, appointed in 1989, branded TFDP a communist front and by 1993, all the region's units were located in commercial property.[235]

In 1988, Sr. Mariani Dimaranan was summoned to appear before the House of Representatives Special Committee on Crime, Fraud and Corruption and a special hearing on proposed "legislation in connection with the alleged communist infiltration of Task Force Detainees of the Philippines".[236] To defeat such initiatives, TFDP relies on cross-party support from Congressmen/women including Wigberto Tanada (LP-PDP-LABAN), Raul

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[233] In a 1989 press statement signed by Bishop Leonardo Legaspi for instance, the CBCP condemned "political groups" that "positively gloat over massacres or cases of torture", avoiding references to TFDP by name ("The Manipulative Use of Human Rights Violations", 11 July 1989)

[234] Palua-Gumanao and Mayola-Dano interview.

[235] Caspe interview.

[236] Letter from Committee Chairman Hermogenes Concepcion Jr, to Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, 10 February 1988, summoning Dimaranan to appear at 10am on 17 February 1988. Concepsion summoned Dimaranan again in a letter dated 29 February 1988 but in a reply on 8 March, TFDP Deputy Chairperson Evelyn Serrano explained that Dimaranan would be out of Manila.

Roco (LDP), and Nikki Coseteng (NPC) in the Senate and Bonifacio Gillego, Gregorio Andolana and Exequiel Javier (all Lakas-NUCD) in the House. Gillego, for instance, introduced a resolution in 1992 commending TFDP and other members of PAHRA for their "achievements, commitment and selfless dedication".[237] Many of TFDP's Congressional allies sit on the House or Senate Human Rights Committees (chaired by Gillego and Tanada respectively in 1993) helping TFDP to push its campaigns, and TFDP attributed legislative successes in 1992, including the repeal of RA1700 and amendments to PD1866 (covering illegal possession of firearms in furtherance of rebellion) to support mobilized in Congress.[238] Equally importantly however, Congressional support helps protect TFDP workers, and pressures the government to respect its legitimacy.[239]

TFDP also relies on an elaborate network of local contacts to keep it informed of human rights abuses, especially in remote areas such as Muslim Mindanao, or inaccessible military camps. Local contacts, TFDP claims, are "vital in every unit for data-gathering- a concerned citizen, a relative of a victim, a former victim helped by TFDP or anyone else who sympathises with the cause of human rights".[240] The network was expanded under Lucero's institution-building thrust and by 1993, TFDP had over 2,200 individual contacts nationwide.[241] TFDP's human rights education programme has been a critical factor in

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[237] House Resolution 399. Though approved by the House Committee on Human Rights, the Resolution was smothered by the Committee on Rules, preventing a vote in the House as a whole (Gillego interview).

[238] Lucero, "Prospects for Peace and Human Rights...".

[239] The Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights held a special hearing on 8 December 1988 to investigate the detention and torture of TFDP worker Susan Aniban in Baguio, 28-30 November 1988 and a military raid of a TFDP staff conference in Ilocos Sir on 11 November 1988. Its 1990 report called for NGO participation in the search for the disappeared and "strengthened dialogue" between the military and human rights NGOs ("Human Rights ...in the Philippines", pg. 73).

[240] "TFDP-Luzon Progress Report, January-June 1987".

[241] Lucero, "....Strategic Assessment 1990-93", pg. 9.

recruitment, especially among military and local government officials.[242]

Like other national democratic organisations, TFDP has long facilitated "exposure" visits by foreign groups and individuals[243] but with the establishment of a Global Advocacy and Networking Programme in 1990, international networking has become an important focus. In 1991, TFDP established the Philippine International Center for Human Rights in Brussels to liaise with European funders and solidarity groups and to lobby European Community institutions[244] and also helped establish the Asia Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) to project its campaigns internationally. By hosting the World Symposium of Human Rights and Development[245] and the International Symposium On Indigenous People's Rights and Development[246] in 1992, TFDP established a reputation as one of the most influential indigenous human rights organisations in the developing world.

11. Conclusion

As TFDP illustrates, the influence of human rights NGOs in the developing world extends far beyond the "international human rights regime". TFDP illustrates that many human rights NGOs have deep roots in civil society, with ties to political parties, the religious, insurgent groups, the media, and other NGOs/POs, and have consequently become

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[242] Minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting of 22 March 1991 note examples of a Provincial Commander in Calbayog who informed TFDP of a new detainee after attending a TFDP seminar, and "a resolution passed enjoining all the municipal mayors to attend a human rights course after a Provincial Board member and four mayors in Surigao del Sir finished one [of TFDP's] courses".

[243] From January to June 1989 for instance, TFDP "facilitated exposures for about 95 foreign groups or individuals", most of whom went to Negros ("TFDP Semi-Annual Report 1989").

[244] PICHR closed temporarily in 1992 however due to funding constraints.

[245] Organised jointly with FLAG, OMCT and SOS-Torture.

[246] Organised jointly with four other Philippine NGOs ("Proceedings...10th National Convention", pg. 8).

important actors in the national politics of numerous countries. The case-study suggests that TFDP has influenced Philippine politics in three main respects. First, it underlines the impact of human rights NGOs on the Philippine state. More than any other single NGO, TFDP undermined the Marcos dictatorship: by crystallizing church concern for human rights; articulating a central cause around which the fragmented opposition could unite after 1983, and around which moderate opposition groups could support the NDF; mobilising international opposition to the Marcos regime; and building a nationwide human rights movement through new organisations such as KAPATID and SELDA. The Philippines lacks a strong judicial tradition, and as former Supreme Court Justice Abraham Sarmiento notes, the pressure politics of TFDP and other human rights NGOs proved more effective at protecting human rights under the Marcos regime than the subordinated judiciary.[247] Influence established during the Marcos dictatorship has been consolidated under the Aquino and Ramos governments. In alliance with PAHRA and FLAG, TFDP played or plays a central role in government structures designed to protect and promote human rights, establishing human rights as a key issue-area in which NGOs have achieved significant influence over government policy. In so doing, TFDP has played a central role in establishing the legitimacy of militant campaigning on behalf of the victims of human rights violations. Similarly, although the Aquino government was undermined by its poor human rights record domestically and abroad, and the attacks of human rights organisations, it desperately attempted to consolidate its democratic legitimacy and improve its international image by seeking NGO co-operation. In the period from 1989 in particular, partnership with human

[247] Abraham Sarmiento, "Philippine Experience in Enforcing a Bill of Rights: Political Realities and Judicial Perspectives", **Human Rights Forum**, Vol. 11 No. 1, 1992, pg. 33.

rights NGOs helped to shore-up the government's rapidly eroding legitimacy.[248]

Second, TFDP illustrates an important nexus between the underground left and a large section of the NGO community, labelled as "national democrat". TFDP remains an emphatic supporter of the traditional national democratic cause.[249] The nationwide human rights movement it built from the 1970s, crystallized in the formation of PAHRA in 1986, represented a tangible expression of the united front that the CPP and NDF could never build, and illustrated important tensions in united front politics. In 1993, TFDP remained committed to the national democratic quest for a structural transformation of Philippine society, but as a broad vision rather than a concrete goal. Its size and influence however provide it with significant leverage in challenging the CPP, especially under its dynamic and outspoken Chairperson, Sr. Mariani Dimaranan. The TFDP also illustrates the role of church NGOs as a base from which to challenge the Catholic hierarchy. An official organ of the Catholic Church,[250] TFDP pioneered the Church's "preferential option for the poor" and remains a significant critic of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

Third, and in contrast to Wiseberg's position in the introduction, TFDP illustrates the inherently political character of Philippine human rights NGOs. High levels and systematic patterns of human rights abuse under the Marcos and Aquino governments polarized national political debate. Given the weaknesses of Philippine political parties in articulating, and mobilising on the basis of, ideologically consistent platforms on issues such as human rights,

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[248] See Silvestre H. Bello, "Justice and Human Rights" in Corazon C. Aquino et al, **The Aquino Administration: Record and Legacy (1986-1992)**, University of the Philippines Press, Quezon City, 1992, which trumpets cooperation between human rights NGOs and the government.

[249] Executive Director Sr. Cres Lucero argues that "You cannot disassociate the TFDP mandate from the overall people's movement [and] people's struggle, which is essentially democratic, national democratic" (Lucero interview, 18 October 1993).

[250] As a working arm of the AMRSP.

NGOs such as TFDP were forced to engage in partisan politics, either individually or in issue-based coalitions. Unless the human rights situation improves to the extent that conflicting perceptions cease to be a significant political cleavage, or political parties improve their ability to represent and articulate issues, by expanding membership and strengthening their ideological platforms, the work of TFDP and other Philippine human rights NGOs will retain its partisan character.

Table 10

1. Human Rights Violations Under Marcos, 1977-1986

Year	Arrests	Salvagings	Disappearances
1977	1,351	51	17
1978	1,620	86	10
1979	1,961	196	48
1980	962	218	19
1981	1,377	321	53
1982	1,911	210	42
1983	2,088	368	145
1984	4,168	538	158
1985	5,967	429	189
1986 (Jan-Feb)	478	74	28
Total	21,883	2,491	709
Monthly Average	198.94	22.65	6.45

2. Human Rights Violations Under Aquino, 1986-1992

Year	Arrests	Salvagings	Disappearances
1986 (Mar-Dec)	1,234	123	62
1987	8,367	267	52
1988	2,882	249	141
1989	2,312	179	83
1990	3,953	149	60
1991	1,106	49	28
1992 (Jan-June)	468	40	15
Total	20,322	1,056	451
Monthly Average	267.39	13.89	5.80

3. Human Rights Violations Under Ramos, 1992-1994

Year	Arrests	Salvagings	Disappearances
7.1992-6.1993	976	64	14
7.1993-6.1994	683	40	4
Total	1,695	104	18
Monthly Average	69.15	4.33	0.75

Sources: 1. G. Sidney Silliman, "Human Rights and the Transition to Democracy", in James F. Eder and Robert L. Youngblood (Eds.), **Patterns of Power and Politics in the Philippines: Implications for Development**, Program for Southeast Asian Studies, Arizona State University, Tempe, 1994, pp. 107. 2. Silliman, ibid, pg. 114 except for Jan-June 1992 figures which come from **Pumipiglas 3: Torment and Struggle After Marcos**, Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, Quezon City 1993, pg. 167. 3. **Yet A Stream of Human Suffering: A Human Rights Report on the Second Year of the Ramos Government**, Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates, Manila, October 1994, pp. 7-8.

CHAPTER SEVEN: Conclusion.

1. The "Grand Modern Fact" of Philippine Politics.

In 1828, the young Whig historian Thomas Macaulay noticed a fundamental realignment in British politics. Edmund Burke's three "estates", the monarchy, parliament, and the established church, had to contend with another, Macaulay argued, for "The gallery in which the reporters sit has become a fourth estate of the realm".[1] With this argument, his biographer noted, "Macaulay penetrated beneath the formal structure of politics to put his finger on [a] great new force", a nascent national media.[2] Macaulay was supported by his sometimes critic Thomas Carlyle who argued in 1848 that "the existence of an Unfettered Press" represented a "grand modern fact": "Is not The Times newspaper an open Forum, open as never Forum was before...One grand branch of the parliaments trade is obviously dead forever".[3]

This dissertation analyses a "grand modern fact" of Philippine politics, the emergence of a community of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and peoples organisations (POs) as an important political force, reflecting the emergence of a "sixth estate" in the politics of developed and developing countries alike.[4] Illustrating the significance of the global "associational revolution", the "striking upsurge in organised voluntary activity and the

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[1] John Clive, **Thomas Babbington Macaulay: The Shaping of an Historian**, Secker & Warburg, London, 1973, pg. 124.

[2] Ibid, pg. 125.

[3] Thomas Carlyle, Pamphlet on "Parliaments", in M.K. Goldberg & J.P. Seigel (Eds.), **Carlyle's Latter-Day Pamphlets**, Canadian Federation of the Humanities, 1983, pp. 277-278.

[4] Trade unions representing the fifth. See **Robert Taylor, The Fifth Estate: Britain's Trade Unions in the Modern World**, revised edition, Pan Books, London, 1980.

creation of private, non-profit or non-governmental organisations",[5] the Philippine NGO/PO sector grew by 148% between January 1984 and June 1993, compared to 65% growth in the private sector over the same period.[6]

Philippine NGOs and POs have yet to establish an important role in the economy, in contrast to the voluntary sectors in developed states. In the United Kingdom, for instance, the total income of 171,434 registered charities accounted for 3.4% of Gross Domestic Product in 1990 while the sector employed 482,000 people, or 2.2% of the total labour force.[7] In the Philippines, no government agency complies statistics on the economic role of NGOs. An estimate, however, would put NGO/PO income as a share of GNP at less than 1.5% and total employment at less than 200,000, or less than 1% of the total labour force.[8]

As such, the main significance of the growth of the Philippine NGO/PO community is political. As the dissertation argues, the proliferation, growth, regional distribution and organisational character of NGOs, as well as the tasks they carry out have all been determined by essentially political factors. Philippine NGOs and the POs with which they

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[5] Lester M. Salamon, "The Rise of the Nonprofit Sector", **Foreign Affairs**, Vol. 73 No. 4, July/August 1994, pg. 109.

[6] Measured by the increase in the number of registrations with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The number of for-profit corporations (stock entities) registered with the SEC grew from 128,100 in January 1984 to 212,270 in June 1993 while the number of NGOs and POs (equivalent to 75% of registered non-stock entities) (see chapter 3) grew from 23,800 to 58,200 (**Monthly Paid-Up Equity Investment Report** series, Securities and Exchange Commission, Manila).

[7] **Charity Trends 1992**, Charities Aid Foundation, Tonbridge, Kent, 1992, pp. 6 & 9. The UK has another 170,000 unregistered voluntary organisations (David Brindle, "Power to the People", **The Guardian**, 21 September 1994), bringing the voluntary sectors share of GDP closer to 5%.

[8] Assuming that: A. the $102m (equivalent to 0.22% of GNP) channelled to Philippine NGOs and POs from abroad (see chapter 4) is quadrupled by (1) Philippine government funding to NGOs; (2) multilateral funding to the Philippine government channelled to NGOs; (3) funding raised by NGOs and POs within the Philippines; and B. the 58,000 NGOs and POs registered in June 1993 employed an average of 4 staff. 1991 labour force= 23m (See **Human Development Report 1993**, United Nations Development Programme and Oxford University Press, New York, 1993, pp. 168 & 180).

work closely are significant mainly for their broad organisational reach and their ability to represent ideologically-coherent interests, making them a significant actor in Philippine politics.

In absolute terms, the Philippines has the third largest NGO/PO community in the developing world behind Brazil and India. In per capita terms however, the Philippines has by far the largest, and represents a remarkable case-study of the political factors promoting the proliferation of NGOs in the developing world. Philippine NGOs, through their antecedents, civic and political organisations, date to the late nineteenth century and despite political upheavals and regime changes since then, the Philippine voluntary sector has developed steadily, evolving through the four generations conceived by David Korten (see Chapter 2). In the Philippines, American colonial policy encouraged the early development of civic associations, providing an impetus to the proliferation of NGOs in the 1950s and again from the late 1970s. In Indonesia, by contrast, a bitter independence struggle waged by a cohesive and militarily-efficient nationalist movement led to the emergence of a powerful state in the post-war period with a significant ability to control civil society and thus limit the proliferation of NGOs. In Malaysia, the colonial legacy of a federal bureaucratic machine similarly led to the emergence of a strong state, while ethnic tensions led to restrictions on political organisations including NGOs. In Thailand, the historical power of the Thai bureaucracy and the central role of the military in post-war politics led to a similar dichotomy between a strong state counterpoised against a retarded civil society.

Contrasts between the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand illustrate the importance of religion in sustaining a culture in which NGOs can proliferate. First, in the Philippines, the Catholic Church has long opposed the state, thus promoting a political culture

that tolerated and encouraged political organisation independent of the state.[9] Second, as a result of American colonial rule (1898-1947), Protestant Churches became active in the Philippines and many voluntary organisations were established by Protestant civic activists. Third, as a result of schisms in the Catholic Church, centred on the Vatican II reforms and the development of liberation theology in the 1960s, NGOs assumed importance as institutional vehicles used to advance opposing philosophies.

In Indonesia, Islam has played a significant role in encouraging the proliferation of voluntary organisations by providing a moral umbrella that voluntary organisations can use to challenge the state's effective monopoly over interpretations of *Pancasila*. At the same time, however, State monopolisation of interpretations of Islam, has forced voluntary organisations to eschew the term "Non-Governmental Organisation" because of its oppositional connotations (see chapter 1) stemming the proliferation of explicitly "non-governmental" organisations. Similarly, in Thailand, Buddhist mutual aid organisations such as the Chung-hua, Lung-hua and the Yi-ho (founded in 1930, 1932 and 1935 respectively), and Christian organisations such as the Young Mens Christian Association (1937) and the Church of Christ Foundation (1943), antecedents of modern Thai NGOs, were established in the early decades of the twentieth century. After World War II however, state-directed Buddhism, mobilized to counter the threat of communism, was used to curb the continued proliferation of civic organisations. Non-Buddhist organisations were tightly controlled while

[9] In 1583, under pressure from the Church, Philip II of Spain abolished *encomienda* (the ceding of rights over land and people), to *conquistadores* (adventurers) in the Philippines. As a result, Spaniards, except friars and tax collectors, were barred from native villages, enabling the main religious orders to acquire substantial tracts of land. Thus, from the late 16th century, the Catholic Church had economic interests distinct from the state which it then protected assiduously.

the Thera Association monitored Buddhist institutions.[10]

Equally however, the Philippines points to factors that have promoted the proliferation of NGOs throughout South-East Asia. As argued in Chapter 2, the Marcos dictatorship (1972-1986) played a decisive role in stimulating the proliferation of NGOs, and shaping the political character of the NGO community. NGOs funded by international, largely European, donors became an important base for activists committed to opposing the dictatorship and working with socio-economic groups adversely affected by its economic policies. In the late 1970s, the Philippine government was forced to involve NGOs in the implementation of development programmes, pressured by bilateral and multilateral donors, economic crises in the wake of the 1974 and 1979 oil slumps, and weaknesses in state programmes designed to organise and mobilize local communities. Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, NGOs proliferated in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia as varying degrees of authoritarian rule and economic growth triggered complex processes of social change that pressured governments to loosen political controls and allow NGOs to proliferate.

Considerable support exists within the NGO literature for the view that NGOs strengthen democratization, although little concrete evidence has been advanced. Edwards and Hulme, for instance, point out that:

> ...donor support for NGOs is predicated at least as much on their supposed role in democratizing the political process as on their role in the provision of welfare services [yet] rarely in the literature is it made clear exactly how NGOs and GROs [Grassroots Organisations, or POs] (and especially the former) are supposed to contribute to "democratization" and the formal

[10] See Amara Pongsapich and Nitaya Kataleeradabhan, **Philanthropy, NGO Activities and Corporate Funding in Thailand**, Chulalongkorn University Social Research Institute, Bangkok, 1994 pp. 19-25;Maniemai Tongswate and Walter Tips, **Coordination Between Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations in Thailand's Rural Development**, Research Monograph No. 5, Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, 1985, pg. 39.

political process.[11]

This dissertation however points to 5 basic means by which NGOs and POs have aided the process of democratization or democratic consolidation in the Philippines, echoing developments in Chile traced by Hojman (See Chapter 1). First, through participation in issue-based social movements, NGOs played a significant role in the two and a half years of unrest from August 1983 that led to the "People Power" revolt of February 1986, a tangible expression of what was otherwise a largely ephemeral phenomenon. NGOs participated in , while NGO leaders helped to broker, issue-based or cause-oriented coalitions that united moderates and radicals, traditional political parties and cause-oriented groups and Manila-based and regional campaigns, and provided leaders and secretarial support to sustain them. As a result, their role in national life was enshrined in the 1987 constitution. Second, in a polity where cabinet ministers with autonomy from entrenched socio-economic elites help to insulate the government from significant pressures, NGOs have represented an important source of political leaders for cabinet and other government positions since 1986, and personnel from the NGO/PO community have been recruited to the upper tiers of the bureaucracy. Third, government departments have devolved or subcontracted key tasks to NGOs and POs including programme design, implementation and appraisal, and by 1990, every government department had an NGO liaison desk. NGOs have thus helped the government to concentrate its limited resources and capability more effectively. Fourth, NGOs and POs now participate actively in election campaigns, especially at the municipal and provincial level, and the 1991 Local Government Code provides for NGO/PO

[11] Michael Edwards and David Hulme, "NGOs and Development: Performance and Accountability in "the New World Order"", paper to the International Workshop on "NGOs and Development: Performance and Accountability in the New World Order", University of Manchester, 27-29 June 1994, pg. 4.

representation in most local elected bodies. As a result, NGOs have helped to undermine electoral violence and to strengthen the legitimacy and efficacy of local elective bodies. Fifth, NGOs play an important role in contemporary social movements that push issue-based political agendas in a polity dominated by patronage-based political debate. In a polity where political parties have weak membership bases and only attempt to mobilise at election-time, NGOs therefore fill an important institutional vacuum and, through their links to membership-based POs, link large sections of the population to the formal processes of electoral democracy.

A number of factors account for the growing political prominence of Philippine NGOs and POs. First, the restoration of democratic rights in 1986, including the right to organise, to free assembly, to participate in elections and to a free press, created a "democratic space" in which NGOs and POs could proliferate. Second, official development assistance (ODA) flows to the Philippines increased dramatically after 1986 as donors rushed to prop up the Aquino government. Illustrating increasing concerns with governance and participation, bilateral and multilateral ODA donors insisted on NGO participation in socio-economic programmes while World Bank and International Monetary Fund structural adjustment loans required cutbacks in government spending, forcing government departments to seek NGO partners. Third, the Aquino government needed NGO support in 1989 to consolidate its position vis-a-vis the armed forces and a Congress dominated by socio-economic, predominantly agrarian, elites. Ultimately, the government failed to secure wide-ranging NGO support but the Ramos administration is committed to securing NGO participation in a "social coalition" that underpins "Philippines 2000", the government's push for Newly Industrializing Country (NIC) status by 2000.

2. Philippine NGOs and Political Science.

Chapter 1 noted that political scientists have been slow to recognise the emergence of NGOs as important political actors in the developing world. Subsequent chapters underlined the political nature of NGO action, reinforcing the point that political scientists are well placed to bring separate literatures on NGO action and on social movements together and to make refinements. The dissertation highlights problems with the NGO and social movements literature alike in interpreting patterns of NGO organisation and activity.

One problem with the NGO literature, attributable in large part to its neoliberal and neopluralist foundation, is the assumption that NGOs have wide political latitude in determining policy and strategy. Liberal-pluralist literature on interest groups sees them as relatively autonomous with scope for manoeuvre determined mainly by the inclinations of members. Clarke, for instance, transfers these assumptions to the NGO literature:

> Because NGOs do not have to be answerable either to parliament, to electorates or to any constituency other than their funders, it is easy to start such an organisation in most countries...Provided they remain within the law of the land and can continue raising the money they need, they can chart their own course. This allows NGOs the space to innovate, to alter course, to grow or die as they see fit. There are rules about what you *cannot* do, but thereafter tremendous freedom.[12]

This dissertation argues however that NGOs face a complex political environment that, at best, exerts a significant influence over strategy and, at worst, restricts the range of available options. In polities such as the Philippines, characterized by intense social polarization, scope for manoeuvre is even further restricted. Chapter 3 noted that NGO relationships with the state are undermined by the enduring legacy of the Marcos regime, the continuing threat of cooptation, the difficulty of interpreting executive-level policy (when the government is

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[12] John Clark, **Democratizing Development: The Role of Voluntary Organisations**, Earthscan Publications, London, 1991, pg. 8. (emphasis from the original).

composed of competing interests and when individual departments exhibit conflicting attitudes towards NGOs) and the danger of becoming enmeshed in patrimonial politics. Chapter 4 analysed institutional forces stimulating the proliferation of NGOs (elite philanthropists, the Church, overseas donors and the underground left) and argued that each exerts significant influence over NGO strategy. In PRRM for instance, strategy must not only reconcile the sometimes conflicting interests and perspectives of overseas donors and elite philanthropists, but must also avoid estranging other NGOs/POs and the underground left. The chapter also analyzed a range of mechanisms through which Philippine NGOs engage in politics (1. coalition-building and participation in contemporary social movements; 2. volunteer mobilization; 3. electoral intervention; 4. participation in local government structures; 5. relationships with state agencies; and 6. networking) and how NGO perspectives on each are influenced by competing institutional interests, an issue tackled in greater detail in the case-studies. In the case of TFDP, not only do foreign donors, the Catholic Church and the underground left exert an influence that constrains TFDP strategy, but in particular cases (eg. the replacement of Sr. Mariani Dimaranan as effective head and the implementation of the sub-regionalisation policy), a coalition between normally antagonistic interests (European donors and the underground left) was required to undertake major initiatives.

Second, the NGO literature is primarily concerned with the socio-economic roles of NGOs and underplays the explicitly political dimension of their activities. In most cases, authors concede that NGO organising and mobilising functions and the relationships with grassroots POs that result, draw NGOs into political activity, but most argue that NGOs play a subordinate role to other institutions. Clayton, for instance, summing up a wide-ranging workshop discussion on the subject, argues that "NGOs have a role in supporting local organisations that are working to establish democracy at a grassroots level, rather than

supporting directly formal political parties".[13] In the Philippines however, NGOs not only support political projects and political parties but in many cases play a critical and central role in mobilising broad issue-based social movements and providing political parties and individual candidates with organisational support during elections. The results of 1992 elections convinced Philippine NGO leaders and academics of the continuing role of NGO coalitions in electoral campaigns (see Chapter 4). Equally, leaders argued that increasing integration into the campaigns of political parties is essential if the "progressive" political projects articulated by NGOs are to achieve greater success.

A third problem is the assertion that NGOs are unaccountable and internally undemocratic. Palmer and Rossiter for instance argue that NGOs "have no legitimacy, authority, or sovereignty and crucially are self-selected and thus not accountable".[14] In the Philippines however, the weak process of institutionalization, which sustains a weak party-political system and trade union movement, has strengthened the legitimacy and credibility of NGOs in the eyes of the national media, government agencies, and sections of Congress. Equally, since the collapse of the Marcos dictatorship, many of the Philippines' larger NGOs, including TFDP and PRRM, have enhanced their accountability and transparency by reorganising internally and developing or expanding membership bases. Pressure from donors played a significant role but the rhetoric of "People Power" which dominated political discourse in the early years of the Aquino government was equally important. The fate of President Aquino and reformers in her administration besieged by the military, conservative

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[13] Andrew Clayton, "Introduction", in Andrew Clayton (Ed.), **Governance, Democracy and Conditionality: What Role for NGOs?**, INTRAC, Oxford, 1994, pg. 1.

[14] R. Palmer and J. Rossiter, "Northern NGOs in Southern Africa: Some Heretical Thoughts", paper presented to the Conference on Critical Choices for the NGO Community: African Development in the 1990s, University of Edinburgh, 1990, cited in Michael Edwards and David Hulme (Eds.), **Making a Difference: NGOs and Development in a Changing World**, Earthscan, London, 1992, pg. 17.

technocrats and local elites underlined the need for NGOs to institutionalize and consolidate their power as a political force.

In a recent paper, Edwards and Hulme argue that NGO accountability is complex, abstract, and poorly analyzed in the NGO literature.[15] Case-studies of PRRM and TFDP underline this point, since the ramifications of membership go beyond immediate questions of accountability or transparency. In PRRM, membership increases the accountability of the board but also enhances PRRM's local influence and supports a broader political project. In TFDP, membership is directed to similar objectives yet it also threatens to undermine TFDP's political focus, curb its autonomy from the NDF, engulf it in intranecine intra-left debate and erode the membership of partner human rights POs. Appeals from Edwards and Hulme for openness and accountability therefore underestimate the competing political pressures NGOs face in a relatively fractious political culture, such as the Philippines', where the absence of strong mediating institutions promotes a polarisation of political debate. In the absence of consensus, NGOs are inevitably forced into partisan positions that undermine openness and transparency, although as TFDP suggests, the consolidation of democratic reforms in the Philippines since 1986 is promoting greater accountability among formerly militant NGOs.

A fourth problem concerns the institutional and individual character of NGOs, and the trend in the NGO literature to emphasise the latter. Farrington and Bebbington argue that "The strategies that [NGOs] pursue and the ways in which they position themselves in civil society and in relationship to the state are an effect (not always linear) of a complex of individual strategies". Ultimately, they suggest, "institutional reproduction is a net effect of

[15] Edwards and Hulme, "NGOs and Development...", pg. 18.

individual actions".[16] In highlighting the crucial role of dynamic and forceful individuals in launching and sustaining prominent NGOs and the importance of personal ties in developing state-NGO relationships, the dissertation supports this view. NGOs however are more than the sum of the individuals who work with them and, like other institutions, develop a momentum of their own. In the Philippines, for instance, NGOs provided a vital institutional platform from which disillusioned former NDF activists could develop a power-base independent of, and in opposition to, the CPP, increasing their autonomy and strength as individuals.

Developing their argument further, Farrington and Bebbington argue that "Decision-makers in NGOs...have room for manoeuvre..[their] choices are not entirely free but nor, so our analysis has gone, are they entirely determined".[17] Here again the NGO literature underestimates the importance of institutional concerns and tensions in influencing NGO strategy and restrictions on individual autonomy of action within NGOs. The case-study of TFDP, for instance, illustrates competing ideological and institutional pressures on senior managers. From above, foreign donors, the government, the Church and political parties in Congress urge moderation while below, pro-CPP human rights POs and cause-oriented groups pressure TFDP to maintain its militancy. One important consequence, as pointed out in Chapter 4, is that Philippine NGO coalitions and broad social movements, riddled with personal, professional, ideological and regional tensions, tend to be reactive and short-lived.

The dissertation illustrates that the social movements literature is equally problematic when applied to the Philippines. First, echoing a similar flaw in the NGO literature, the

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[16] John Farrington and Anthony Bebbington (Eds.), **Reluctant Partners: Non-Governmental Organisations, The State and Sustainable Agricultural Development**, Routledge, London, 1993, pg. 56.

[17] Ibid, pg. 57.

social movements literature underestimates the impact of prevailing political culture on NGOs. Lehmann for instance concedes that NGOs and social movements risk being sucked into clientelistic politics and correctly differentiates this risk from the separate threat of cooptation, yet he also argues that they undermine patron-clientelism by avoiding it as a means of organisation.[18] This dissertation, however, illustrates the significant role of patron-clientelism in NGO organising activities. Fragmentation within the Philippine NGO community and tension within NGO coalitions is to a significant extent underpinned by personal cleavages and many NGOs entail a small, subordinate staff ranged around a single, dominant, individual. Equally, relationships between NGOs and state agencies are characterised by significant patron-client ties, with government ministers appointed from the NGO community showing clear favouritism towards their respective organisations.

Second, illustrating the neo-marxist basis of the social movements literature, some authors argue that institutionalization undermines the political efficacy of social movements, and by implication, NGOs. In contrast to the concern with "scaling-up" in the NGO literature, Gunder-Frank and Fuentes argue that "...institutionalization weakens social movements...[T]hey require flexible, adaptive and autonomous nonauthoritarian organisation to direct social power in pursuit of social goods which can be pursued only through random spontaneity".[19] PRRM experience's supports this point. Early success, built on the dynamism and zeal of its volunteer Rural Reconstruction Workers dissipated in the late 1960s and 1970s as the organisation became increasingly bureaucratic. In the period since 1986

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[18] David Lehmann, **Democracy and Development in Latin America: Economics, Politics and Religion in the Postwar Period**, Polity Press, London, 1990, pg. 174.

[19] Andre Gunder-Frank and Marta Fuentes, "Civil Democracy: Social Movements in Recent World History" in Samir Amin, Giovanni Arrighi, Andre Gunder-Frank and Immanuel Wallerstein (Eds.), **Transforming the Revolution: Social Movements and the World System**, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1990, pg. 176.

however, PRRM's bureaucratic character has proved a significant ingredient in its success. Similarly, TFDP's dynamism and stature increased as it evolved from an essentially volunteer organisation in the mid 1970s to a professional NGO with centralised management structures. This dissertation also suggests that NGOs characterised by a strong process of institutional development play a critical role in sustaining social movements in polities characterised by a weak process of institutionalization within civil society. Again highlighting the importance of institutional pressures on NGOs, TFDP has played a crucial role in sustaining the Philippine human rights movement, despite lacking full autonomy from the CPP, a party noted for its centralizing and authoritarian instincts.

A third problem, again echoing the neo-marxist underpinnings of much of the social movements literature, is the suggestion that social movements develop spontaneously.[20] The reactive and transitory nature of Philippine social movements such as the Freedom From Debt Coalition (FDC) or the Congress for a Peoples Agrarian Reform (CPAR) underpins this point. Philippine social movements however are also underpinned by a complex coalition of NGOs, POs, cause-oriented groups and political parties, and NGOs play an important institutional role in launching and sustaining them, undermining arguments about their spontaneous character.

Fourth, some social movements theorists argue that new or contemporary social movements depoliticize previously activated popular sectors.[21] In an important respect, this

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[20] See for instance Ponna Wignaraja, "Rethinking Development and Democracy", in Ponna Wignaraja (Ed.), **New Social Movements in the South: Empowering the People**, Zed Books, London, 1993, pp. 19 & 28.

[21] See, for instance, Samir Amin, "Social Movements in the Periphery", in ibid, pg. 76. Amin argues that "some" of the "new" social movements "are deadends,.. symptoms of the crisis, not solutions to it, and exclusively products of disillusionment. They will eventually lose steam as they reveal their powerlessness in the face of the real challenge" (pg. 87). Amin however fails to identify these movements, or criteria which others might use to identify them.

argument is problematic when applied the Philippines. During the Marcos regime, Dohner and Haggard note, the urban "popular sector" and the labour movement remained weak and unable to defend themselves against the onslaught of structural adjustment policies while under Aquino, labour's power remained "quite limited".[22] Within this context, NGOs have played a crucial role in sustaining urban social movements and articulating the mobilising discourse of "new politics". The case of the Philippines, however, also suggests that NGOs and the contemporary social movements in which they participate *do* deactivate previously activated popular sectors (see further below).

3. NGOs, the State and Civil Society in the Philippines.

The proliferation of NGOs and POs and their increasing role in political life has led to wide-ranging speculation among Philippine politicians, activists and commentators from both left and right. In 1972, Edicio de la Torre founded the underground Christians for National Liberation (CNL), the largest constituent organisation in the National Democratic Front (NDF). Released from prison in 1986, de la Torre foreswore armed struggle and the democratic centralism of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) to focus on building NGOs and POs. De la Torre helped establish the Institute for Popular Democracy (IPD), and later established the Education for Life Foundation (ELF). By 1993, he viewed NGOs and POs as critical new institutions in advancing the interests of millions traditionally estranged from political power and economic opportunity: "the [government]-NGO-PO trinity", de la

[22] Robert Dohner and Stephen Haggard, **The Political Feasibility of Adjustment in the Philippines**, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Centre, Paris, 1994, pp. 11 and 22.

Torre wrote, "structures our dreams of empowerment".[23]

De la Torre's optimism echoes a vibrant discourse about the possibilities and limitations of NGO action among activists based in NGOs, POs and "cause-oriented groups". Mainstream political actors however have become increasingly aware of the discourse, its implications and the need to control it. In a speech in Guam in 1993 for instance, Senate President Edgardo Angara, a prominent leader, at that time, of the opposition which Ramos's "strategic alliance" is designed to circumvent,[24] argued that "the transformation of NGOs into a potent political force underscores the purposeful and strong national effort to turn the Philippines into Asia's next economic dragon...NGOs [have become] a formidable movement for people empowerment, helping the government strengthen grass-roots linkages so vital to faster and more equitable growth and development".[25] The apparent consensus between the moderate left and right, between politicians and social activists traditionally opposed to each other, indicates a slow drift to the centre in Philippine politics, a post-authoritarian process of normalisation. Equally however, it raises fundamental questions about the nature of NGO action and its impact on Philippine politics, the state and civil society. Does a vibrant NGO community strengthen civil society? Can it transform relations between the state and civil society? Can it help to empower the millions traditionally marginalized from political participation?

4. NGOs and Civil Society in the Philippines.

In a seminal work of political science theory, Samuel Huntington argued in 1968 that

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[23] Edicio de la Torre, "Foreword" in Eric Guiterrez, **Ties That Bind: A Guide To The Family, Business And Other Interests in the Ninth Congress**, Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, Manila 1994, pg. ii.

[24] Angara later joined the reconstituted, pro-Ramos, Lakas-Laban coalition.

[25] "Angara cites rise of NGOs...", **The Manila Bulletin**, 13 June 1993.

"praetorianism", political disorder that inevitably and necessarily led to military intervention and authoritarian rule, resulted in developing polities when political institutionalization failed to aggregate ever-increasing rates of political participation stimulated by economic growth and social change.[26] To resolve the conundrum, Huntington recommended restricting political participation to a level that did not overburden existing institutions, allowing participation to expand only as institutionalization gathered momentum. Widely dismissed for its authoritarian bent and thinly-disguised preoccupation with American national security concerns, Huntington nevertheless highlighted a critical problem in developing countries: political institutionalization inevitably fails to keep pace with the exponential growth in political demands from previous marginalised social strata, triggered by rapid economic growth and/or social change. The Philippines epitomizes the dilemma. The collapse of the Marcos regime in February 1986 led to an outpouring of political demands suppressed by almost 14 years of authoritarian rule. Political institutions had also been repressed however and could not recover at a rate sufficient to aggregate competing political demands. The result was growing polarization and the renewal of fighting between the armed forces and the New Peoples Army in February 1987.

But how do NGOs help to resolve the Huntington conundrum? Huntington himself foresaw no role for them,[27] yet in arguing that political modernization involves the rationalization of authority, the differentiation of structures and the expansion of political participation[28], he provides a clue, for NGOs have strengthened each of these processes in

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[26] Samuel P. Huntington, **Political Order in Changing Societies**, Yale University Press, Yale, 1968.

[27] Huntington felt that the political stalemate between state and an agrarian- or rural based civil society could only be broken through four mechanisms: a nationalist movement; a competitive party system; a military coup; and revolution (ibid, pg. 75).

[28] Ibid, pg. 93.

the Philippines. NGOs have contributed a rationalization of authority in a number of ways. First, they have promoted issue-based political debate in a polity dominated by patronage-based political debate and filled a crucial gap left by political parties. In the Philippines, the weak membership base and formal local networks of political parties (with the possible exception of the Communist Party of the Philippines) allows NGOs and POs to organise and mobilise in a relative institutional vacuum. Because of their professional staff (often prominent activists), well-developed administrative systems, regular funding, and research, documentation and publication programmes, NGOs provide leaders and secretarial support needed to launch issue-specific political campaigns. As a result, NGOs and NGO leaders play an important brokering role in broad social movement-based coalitions such as the Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA), the Congress for a Peoples Agrarian Reform (CPAR) and the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) that have helped to undermine patronage-based debate. Second, NGOs promote legal forms of political struggle. In the Philippines in particular, they absorbed both the rank-and-file and the senior cadre of the Communist Party, especially following the releases of 1986, and exerted a moderating influence on the CPP (eg. TFDP) or undermined it through breakaways (eg. the popular democrats in PRRM). As both case-studies illustrate, NGOs provide critics of the CPP with an institutional base from which to challenge its quest for hegemony over the left-wing opposition. Third, because NGOs use their direct programme experience as a platform from which to project political campaigns, NGO advocacy tends to be less rhetorical, more focused, well-argued and better documented than the campaigns of cause-oriented groups, again exerting a moderating influence on broad social movements.

NGOs have also contributed to a differentiation of structures. NGOs complement and supplement the institutions which have traditionally fostered political debate in the

Philippines, including trade unions, peasant associations, political parties and the Churches. As the cases of PRRM and TFDP illustrate, leading Philippine NGOs have overcome significant pressures in maintaining or expanding their autonomy from other actors including government, the underground left, the Catholic Church and business interests. Although the NGO community as a whole is highly fragmented, Philippine NGOs unite around particular ideological positions, (eg. national democrat, popular democrat, socialist, social democratic etc.) providing ideologically-coherent choices to partner POs. NGOs have also developed targeted programmes, often in alliance with other institutions, leading to the specialization of function inherent to a differentiation of structures.

The expansion of political participation represents the main political achievement of Philippines NGOs. Traditional mass-membership institutions such as political parties, trade unions and peasant associations lack the effective ability to mobilise and aggregate political demands. The party political system remains debilitated by weak membership bases, weak internal party discipline, and weak ideological cohesion. *Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino* (Fight for Philippine Democracy), ostensibly the largest political party in Congress, but in reality a disparate coalition of personalist cliques, has a national membership of little more than 1,500.[29] Even the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), the only mass-membership political party in the Philippines and legalised in 1993, had only 3,000 members in the late 1980s.[30] Thus, on its own the Philippine party system cannot facilitate political participation to the extent that it anchors effective functioning democratic institutions. Trade unions are equally problematic. In 1991 for instance, registered trade unions had a total

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[29] "Laban Overhaul Readied", **The Manila Times**, 21 November 1994.

[30] "Reaffirm Our Basic Principles and Rectify Errors", Central Committee, Communist Party of the Philippines, July 1992, pg. 33.

membership of 3,114,000, equivalent to only 13% of the total labour force,[31] and the particular character of Philippine industry, with little heavy manufacturing or geographically-concentrated industrial activity (with the exception of Manila), undermines the power of trade unions in expanding participation. Statistics on the number and membership of peasant associations is difficult to secure since many do not register with government (although the 2,916 registered rural cooperatives directly employ 17,496 workers[32]). As with trade unions however , particular obstacles exist to using them to expand political participation. While relatively spontaneous and short-lived political campaigns often develop in response to specific agrarian crises, few peasant associations can financially support the mass leaders and administrative capacity needed to become durable and proactive political actors. In addition, while trade unions are limited to workers and peasant associations to particular types of farmers, NGOs make wide-ranging appeals to a variety of identities and in response to disparate concerns. NGOs therefore represent a vital supplement to trade unions and peasant associations in expanding political participation.

Underlining this argument, Robin Broad reported in 1993 that NGOs and POs had an organised constituency of 5m to 6m, or almost 10% of the population.[33] Broad offers no

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[31] **1991 Philippine Development Report**, National Economic and Development Authority, Manila, June 1992, pg. 217. Thompson notes that in 1985, trade unions claimed a labour force unionisation rate of 20% but that a mere 262,000 workers (2.6% of the labour force) were covered by collective bargaining agreements. He claims that trade union membership is closer to the latter than to the former figure (Mark Thompson, "The Labor Movement Opposition to the Marcos Regime", in **Proceedings of the Thirteenth International Symposium on Asian Studies 1991**, Asian Research Service, Hong Kong, pg. 418).

[32] Fernando T. Aldaba, "The Role of Philippine NGOs in Social Transformation: The Need for an Assessment", paper prepared for the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO), October 1992, pg. 7, citing statistics produced by the Cooperatives Development Authority.

[33] Robin Broad with John Cavanagh, **Plundering Paradise: The Struggle for the Environment in the Philippines**, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1993, pg. 135.

details of her calculations but almost certainly they include the membership of trade unions, peasant associations, rural cooperatives, and Basic Christian Communities.[34] Broad's estimate exaggerates the organised constituency of NGOs and POs but it points to two important characteristics of the NGO/PO community; first, that a disparate range of institutions such as trade unions, peasant associations and cooperatives are now viewed generically in the Philippines as "peoples' organisations" in keeping with a significant new popular discourse; and second, that NGOs play an important intermediary role in coalescing these institutions in issue-based contemporary social movements. NGOs have a significant ability to liaise between a disparate range of institutions including Peoples Organisations (trade unions, peasant associations, rural co-operatives and issue-specific "cause-oriented groups"), the Churches, business concerns, political parties, and government departments. This "intermediary" or "*meso*" position makes NGOs a distinctive and additional "layer" of civil society, between local mass-memberships institutions such as peasant associations, rural cooperatives, credit unions, and Basic Christian Communities on the one hand and national institutions such as political parties, the national media and government on the other. In this sense, NGOs have contributed to a strengthening of civil society.

A number of factors however suggest that NGOs simultaneously weaken civil society or replicate existing weaknesses. First, the proliferation of NGOs since the mid-1980s resulted in significant part from the weakening of other political forces, especially the armed and underground left. The case-study of PRRM for instance illustrates that NGOs often mobilise sectors already organised and politically active, by competing with other well-established NGOs and luring away POs, often from the clutches of the CPP. The CPP itself

[34] Elsewhere, Broad notes that the figure includes 1m trade union members and 1m members of peasant associations (Robin Broad, "The Poor and the Environment: Friends or Foes?", **World Development**, Vol. 22 No. 6, 1994).

estimates that membership shrank by 300% by the late 1980s (due to strategic blunders and the government counterinsurgency operations[35]) and its mass base shrank to a similar extent amid intense organising by NGOs.[36] According to Boudreau, other socialist parties were also affected by a general pattern of demobilization during the Aquino years.[37] This dissertation suggests that the proliferation of NGOs and POs changed the character of popular political participation after 1986. By concentrating on the upward linkages that NGOs form, especially with government actors, the dissertation offers little evidence on the character of downward relationships (between NGOs and beneficiaries).[38] Thus, while the TFDP case-study illustrated the organisation of victims of human rights and their relatives as participant political forces (through POs such as FIND, KAPATID and SELDA) it did not make clear whether such activity increased participation or simply attracted support away from other organisations or institutions. Despite this lacunae however, the dissertation suggests that NGO proliferation intensified competition among intermediary institutions for the support of POs and mass memberships. In the Philippine context, historically, such competition weakens civil society by fragmenting mass movements and making them vulnerable to cooptation by the

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[35] "Reaffirm Our Basic Principles...", pg. 33.

[36] Bello, for instance, estimates that the CPP's mass base contracted by 40% between the late 1980s and 1992 (Walden Bello, "The Crisis of the Philippine Progressive Movement: A Preliminary Investigation", **Debate**, No. 4, September 1992, pg. 45.

[37] Vincent Boudreau, "At the Margins of the Movement: Grassroots Associations in the Philippine Socialist Network", Ph.D. thesis, Department of Government, Cornell University, 1993, pg. 20.

[38] Although the research does provide tentative support for Gregorio-Medal's conclusion that Philippine NGO employees are largely middle-class and university-educated and that Philippine NGOs are consequently middle-class oriented (Angelita Gregorio-Medal, "Development Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the Democratization of Philippine Society", Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Sociology, University of Bielefeld, Germany, 1992, Chapter 5, especially pg. 140). Chapter 5 illustrated resentment on the part of local NGOs and POs at the higher salaries paid by PRRM and consequent poaching of staff, while Chapter 6 illustrated similar resentment from local human rights POs at the salaries paid to TFDP workers and their resultant life styles, including eating in restaurants and wearing fashionable clothes.

Another problem is that it is difficult to compare the incremental policy changes wrought by NGO action and the social polarisation and consequent structural change wrought by more militant political action, and hence that NGOs increased the efficacy of political participation. If NGOs do not improve the efficacy of political participation, they can hardly be said to have strengthened civil society.

A second major problem is the distinctive regulatory environment found in the Philippines. As Chapter 3 noted, the weak regulatory framework enforced at the national level, and a resultant environment which gave considerable scope to local officials to shape the political character of the NGO community, allowed a penetration of the NGO community by social forces opposed to structural change. As a result, the NGO community became an arena within which battles from society at large were internalised, and multiplied, Gramscian "trenches" or "permanent fortifications" in a "war of position" waged between dominant and subordinate classes.[39] This complicates the government's attempt to seek a strategic partnership with NGOs since a large section of the NGO community is used to defend the patronage-based character of the political system, and the particular interests of entrenched socio-economic elites. In the sense that Philippine politics has for hundreds of years been characterized by a weak state in perennial conflict with strong, disparate, social forces, NGOs simply replicate existing tensions within civil society and between society and the state.

A third problem is that NGOs, like other political institutions, are an integral part of society, and reflect its dominant values and ethos. While NGOs have a certain capacity to

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[39] According to Gramsci, "The massive structures of the modern democracies, both as State organisations and as complexes of associations in civil society, constitute for the art of politics as it were the 'trenches' and the permanent fortifications of the front in the war of position: they render merely 'partial' the element of movement which before used to be 'the whole' of the war, etc." (Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (Eds.), **Selections From The Prison Notebooks Of Antonio Gramsci**, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1971, pg. 243.

alter political culture, eg. animating issue-based political debate in a polity dominated by patronage-based debate, the logical consequence is that they remain open to influence from other institutions. As Chapters 4 to 6 illustrated, Philippine NGOs are characterised by regional, ideological, professional and personality cleavages, undermining their ability to strengthen civil society. Yet in a polarised political culture like the Philippines', institutions that aggregate competing political demands take on a strategic character and NGOs have made significant progress in reducing tension within the NGO community and between NGOs and the state through coalition initiatives such as the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO), illustrating a political maturity that distinguishes them from political parties, trade unions and peasant associations.

5. NGOs and the Philippine State.

The work of Anek Laothamatas and Andrew MacIntyre on business associations in Thailand and Indonesia respectively marks a new and influential vein in the study of South-East Asian politics.[40] Despite the prevalence of authoritarian patterns of rule in the region in recent decades, fissures in state cohesion, triggered by complex processes of economic and social change, are being increasingly exploited, giving rise to a new degree of autonomy to important political actors and social forces. In turn, this new autonomy is changing the nature both of state-society relations and of "development" in South-East Asia. In its analysis of the NGO community and its impact on, and beyond, the Philippine state, this research aims to reinforce this new vein in the study of South-East Asian politics.

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[40] Anek Laothamatas, **Business Associations and the New Political Economy of Thailand**, Westview Press, Boulder, 1992; Andrew MacIntyre, **Business and Politics in Indonesia**, Asian Studies Association of Australia in association with Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1990.

The Philippine state is simultaneously both strong and weak. It has sufficient strength to extract rents through the selective application of government regulations, to support the economic interests of its key supporters, and to permeate civil society (through government-influenced trade unions, NGOs etc.). Similarly, it controls a military and para-military apparatus that successfully represses threats to the status quo. On the other hand however, the state is unable to isolate its administrative machinery from the pervasive influence of powerful social forces and is unable to implement reform-oriented programmes or attract broadly-based institutional support.[41]

Chapters 2-3 and 5-6 illustrate significant ways in which NGOs help to strengthen the state. Through participation, they help to build pockets of efficiency within government agencies, provide strategic partners for reform-oriented ministries, fill voids in the government's social service delivery role, and help the executive to circumvent Congress to forge direct ties with the population. Similarly, through protest, NGOs strengthen the state: by aggregating and moderating political demands and by providing channels distinct from Congress through which disputes can be negotiated and dissipated. "[F]reedom of association in political matters", Alexis de Tocqueville argued in 1840, "is not so dangerous to public tranquillity as is supposed; and...possibly after having agitated society for some time, it may strengthen the State in the end".[42]

Claims that state-NGO links are critical or central to government attempts to increase its capacity and autonomy need careful qualification however. President Ramos has publicly committed his government to attracting wide-ranging NGO/PO participation in a "strategic

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[41] Migdal refers to this as "the duality of state strength" (Joel S. Migdal, **Strong States and Weak Societies: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World**, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1988, pg. 8.

[42] Alexis de Tocqueville, **Democracy in America**, Volume II, (translated by Henry Reeve), P.F. Collier & Son, New York, 1900, pg. 126.

alliance" that engenders social cohesion and underpins economic growth. Political scientists face an interesting challenge in conceptualizing such an alliance. Montgomery uses the concept of "bureaucratic populism" to describe growing state overtures to NGOs in different parts of the developing world.[43] Historically however, populism has been the more general correlate of corporatism, a specific institutional arrangement linking government, business and organised labour in tripartite power-sharing structures. In the Philippines, the Ramos government is committed to developing relationships with business, organised labour, and NGOs/POs, in that order of priority, and state-NGO relationships are therefore essentially neo-corporatist. The strategy has clear historical roots. In the 1950s, as argued in Chapters 2 and 5, President Ramon Magsaysay used NGOs such as PRRM to undermine the Hŭk insurgency and to expand his autonomy from Congress. Simultaneously, Magsaysay continued to enforce the demobilization of militant labour achieved in the early 1950s through the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus,[44] and the 1953 Industrial Peace Act. The Act instituted collective-bargaining with the newly-established and government controlled Philippines Trade Union Congress and allowed the Magsaysay government to promote US-style economic trade unionism and to suppress its political equivalent. Ramos government strategy is remarkably similar. During the Aquino years, the militant trade union movement *Kilusang Mayo Uno* (May First Movement) was weakened by the murder of its leaders and the repression of its grassroots constituent members. During the early years of the Ramos administration, the internal CPP "Reaffirm" V "Reject" debate in 1992-93 led to a split and

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[43] J.D. Montgomery, **Bureaucrats and People: Grassroots Participation in Third World Development**, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1988.

[44] Suspension of the writ of habeas corpus between 1950 and 1952, the resultant arrest of labour leaders, and the murder of labour leaders by privately-armed anti-communist vigilante gangs led to collapse of urban trade union organisations such as the Manila-based Congress of Labour Organisations and the Cebu-based *Federacion Obrero de Filipinas* (Federation of Filipino Workers).

KMU fragmented, its threat to the government radically diminished.[45] At the same time, the government has maintained loose collective bargaining mechanisms through the Labour Advisory and Consultative Council (LACC) with the support of the moderate Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP), which have proved successful in controlling militant labour activity. Similarly, Ramos has made significant overtures to the Chinese-Filipino business community (previously estranged by Aquino government links to the Filipino businessmen of European origin but consolidating their position as the dynamo of the private sector), to attract their support in circumventing Congress, and hence increase productive investment.

The government's commitment to collaboration with NGOs is, in part, tactical. Much of the collaboration in the post-1986 period is attributable to the Philippines' traditional Presidential system of government revived in the 1987 constitution which institutionalizes an adversarial relationship between the President and Congress and forces the President to seek cabinet members outside the House and Senate. Both Presidents Aquino and Ramos turned to NGO leaders for cabinet appointees who in turn recruited NGO workers into the bureaucracy and involved NGOs in departmental planning and programme implementation. As of 1993, however, the Ramos government is exploring the possibility of abolishing the Presidential system and replacing it with a parliamentary system of government. If successful, the plan would deny NGOs access to cabinet positions, undermine collaboration with government departments and force government and opposition political parties alike to challenge NGOs in organising and mobilising specific local interests.

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[45] Member organisations opposed to KMU's support for the orthodox Marxist-Leninist-Mao Tse Tung Thought philosophy of the CPP, left to form *Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino* (BMP, Alliance of Filipino Workers)(BMP was previously the main left-wing labour movement before being banned in 1980) in 1993, seriously eroding KMU's ranks.

The significant influence NGOs have acquired over government policy in areas such as agricultural, fisheries and forestry development, land reform, health, environmental protection, and human rights highlights the general lack of autonomy the Philippine state enjoys from societal interests and its inability to enforce existing laws and regulations. A strengthening of government autonomy from elite societal interests, and its ability to implement the reform-oriented social change needed to consolidate progress in these specific areas, will inevitably necessitate a firmer stance towards the "popular sector". This will inevitably curb the political power of NGOs through the enforcement of existing regulations and the introduction of new ones.

Nevertheless, despite progress made since 1987, institutional paralysis (notably the gridlock between the Senate and executive and the sluggish performance of government ministries) continues to undermine the post-authoritarian process of democratic consolidation. Within this context, the proliferation of NGOs since 1986 and their increasing participation in politics ensures their continuing political importance. A number of factors suggest the number of NGOs in 1993 will continue to increase. In many parts of the country, NGO numbers are insufficient to fill available places on local government bodies or to meet the demand for NGO partners for "pork barrel" programmes such as the Countryside Development Fund. Competing political forces will inevitably respond by establishing new organisations. As implementation of the 1991 Local Government Code continues, government resources dispersed at the local level will increase dramatically, while Congressional pork-barrel funding to NGOs through the CDF and similar programmes designed to counteract the patronage power of central government will also increase.[46] These developments suggest that

[46] In 1994, Congress reportedly secured P9.5b (roughly US$340m) in "congressional initiative funds" from the government in return for approving a value-added tax bill (See Rigoberto Tiglao, "Paralysed by Politics", **Far Eastern Economic Review**, 12 May 1994,

NGOs will become increasingly important as weapons in conflicts between the government and entrenched socio-economic elites, forcing progressive NGOs, including those ostensibly concerned with socio-economic development, to maintain their involvement in political processes. At the same time, the current fragmentation of the Communist Party of the Philippines and its mass base, echoing the fragmentation of Huk organisations in the 1950s and '60s, may well lead to a process of demobilization and falling political participation. NGOs and the POs with which they work closely will therefore face the challenge of sustaining existing levels of organisation and mobilisation among affected communities. Almost certainly, the continuing weak process of institutionalization in the Philippines will prevent NGOs from focusing on the socio-economic roles envisaged by the "third sector" advocates. Political scientists will therefore continue to find important clues to the evolving character of Philippine politics in the praxis of Philippine NGOs and further justification for attempts to explore the general political science of NGO organisation and activity.

pg. 23). Almost certainly, the total value of CDF funding, a high, albeit unknown, amount of which is channelled through NGOs, will increase significantly.

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